



LEGEND OF THE GREAT SAINT

BOOK 02

DEMON

TRANSFORMATION

Dream Teller

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Legend of the Great Saint

(大圣传)

by

Dream Teller

(说梦者)

Synopsis

Among the demons, the supreme ones are called “Great Saints.”

A young man leaves his mountain village, treading far and wide under the heavens, striding step by step into legend, becoming a myth.

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Book 02 - Demon Transformation

Chapter 59: Skeleton's Initial Completion

Li Qingshan only remembered then. The green bull had said that using the blood of beasts was merely a temporary stopgap when cultivating the <Dao of the Beautiful Bones>. You still needed human blood to genuinely cultivate, moreover blood still warm from people dead not long ago. It was also better the richer the blood energy.

Those bandits were precisely the great materials the green bull spoke about. Although he didn't agree with it, he didn't mind it too much either. He dragged over the mass of bandit corpses, piling them into a small hill on the open ground. The scene was very cruel and dreadful. The thick scent of blood assaulted his nose. Even Li Qingshan himself felt somewhat disturbed. He couldn't resist searching his heart, did I do that?

But he immediately calmed down. Only this was called just retribution. The laws of Heaven would have been unfair instead if this group of bandits didn't meet such an end. One could do anything without being tangled in regrets as long as one had a clear conscience. Then he fastened the porcelain jar containing Little An's skeleton upside down on the hill of corpses, following the green bull's instructions.

Little An flew around randomly, a little anxious, until he heard Li Qingshan say: "Go then!" He turned into a clear breeze and entered inside the porcelain jar.

The corpse hill quivered. The blood that originally flowed down suddenly reverted itself and flowed to the porcelain jar. The

porcelain jar followed suit and trembled as the reek of blood became increasingly fainter.

There was a “kacha kacha” after a long time. Crack after crack appeared on the porcelain jar, leaking beams of red light like blood clots.

Li Qingshan frowned and held his breath. The scene in front of him was really too much like some terrifying evil ritual, and this present development was even more like some demon about to be born into the world.

The porcelain jar exploded into pieces with a bang. A small blood-red skeleton sat upright on the hill of corpses, two blood flames fiercely burning inside its eye sockets. It was clearly an extremely strange and frightening scene, but the small skeleton had unexpectedly its two hands held together just like an old monk sitting in meditation. It actually gave off a holy sensation of one who'd reached nirvana and comprehended the truth of life and death. That cruel and dreadful hill of corpses vaguely resembled the lotus throne the Buddha quietly meditated on. Those pale arms extended out just like pure white lotus petals. It was utterly weird.

Li Qingshan probed with a call: “Little An?”

The little skeleton lifted its head. The blood flames swayed, then it transformed into a bloody shadow that flew his way, so fast even Li Qingshan was stunned. This was simply even faster than Yang Anzhi's movement technique. He instinctively wanted to raise his hands and block or even counterattack, but then he stopped and allowed it to charge into his bosom. It bumped on his chest with a

“dong,” and slid down.

Li Qingshan suddenly didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He saw Little An tumble and sit on the ground, shaking his head, totally looking like he didn't control his speed.

Little An stood up, looked up at Li Qingshan, and saw from within his eyes his own present appearance. He seemed to suddenly realize that he wasn't an incorporeal ghost anymore. He lowered his head and watched his hands that were comprised of only tiny bones, then looked again at his body. After that he shuddered violently, and after that he squatted on the ground, his two hands covering his face.

Although there wasn't a single sound coming out, Li Qingshan could still clearly feel that he was weeping. At least he still had a human form as a ghost. Anyone who changed into this frightening inhuman appearance would be unable to keep their calm. What's more, he was only a child.

Li Qingshan felt a heartache. His heart that had been hardened like iron amidst the massacre suddenly softened down. He kneaded his sour nose and squatted down with a smile. He rubbed Little An's head: “Why are you like this, this isn't very cute. You were the only one who could touch me before, I couldn't touch you. Now we're even.”

Little An lifted his head, the blood flames in his eye sockets brightening a little. He stretched his arms and lightly hugged Li Qingshan, pasting his head against his chest. Li Qingshan spread his arms open and hugged him tightly.

Amidst the wind and snow, under the mountain of corpses, a teenager and a tiny skeleton embraced and hugged each other, cuddling together as if they could feel warmth from their icy-cold bodies.

The green bull watched silently at the side, and there was none of the usual teasing expression in its eyes.

Little An had after all the temperament of a child, and his mood quickly became better. He inquisitively experimented with his new body, randomly walking on the ground a moment, getting a simple blade dropped by a bandit and randomly waving it around the next moment. Or he'd jump up, reaching several dozen feet in the air in a single leap, but he couldn't help dropping back down with a "pa" and ended up sprawled on the ground.

Li Qingshan went forward with great alarm, afraid he'd shatter his slender bones in the fall, but he saw him turn over and stand up just like that, scratching his head as he remembered he wasn't a ghost and couldn't fly anymore. But he wasn't disappointed and started to crazily dash amidst the wind and snow once again.

Only then did Li Qingshan become relieved and expose a faint smile. Perhaps he was watching through affection-tinted glasses, but he truly didn't feel that Little An was all that frightening. The little skeleton had a sort of strange cuteness instead as its figure made various childish motions. However, others would certainly not think so.

He turned his head toward the green bull and asked: “Will Little An really spend his whole life looking like this?”

The green bull said: “There’s nothing wrong with this appearance. How many men beseech gods and worship Buddha to become like this, and they can’t even succeed! But ordinary people don’t even need to think about making a yin spirit cultivate into a substantial body. Although it’s a supernatural skill from the way of demons, it doesn’t suffer restriction from any Buddhist law or Taoist technique. Moreover he will progress at lightning speed and possess formidable strength. If this supernatural skill were to spread out, I guarantee it’ll have ten thousand times the effect of the spirit ginseng in your hands. No matter monsters demons buddhas or daoists, they’d all come to snatch it.”

If someone offered you a great banquet, could you really blame them because the tableware wasn’t good enough? Li Qingshan could only smile wryly as he said: “I already knew that the <Dao of the Beautiful Bones> was much more powerful than the <Strength of Nine Bulls and Two Tigers> just by the sounds of it.”

Not only the speed was so fast that even he couldn’t react, almost. When he turned his head around he saw Little An grab the seventh boss’s great iron hammer a hundred pounds heavy and randomly wave it around. Afterwards his hands slipped on the hammer handle because they were too small, and the iron hammer flew out several dozen feet away, smashing into a wall with a loud rumble before knocking it down. The present Little An could definitely massacre the whole Black Wind Camp by himself more effortlessly than himself.

Moreover, the Black Wind camp master found this paper talisman from who knew where and was able to contend against his strength of one bull just like that. Something that could be obtained by this head bandit would certainly not be any extraordinary high level stuff. He couldn't help but start to feel a sliver of doubt about this Strength of Nine Bulls and Two Tigers.

“He absorbed the blood essence from a hundred persons, of course his strength won't be weak. It's actually not that difficult either if he wants to restore a human form.” The green bull laughed mischievously and changed the topic, brushing off Li Qingshan's doubts.

Li Qingshan indeed left his own affairs behind: “Is it true? What's the way?”

The green bull said: “One way is to cultivate the <Dao of the Beautiful Bones> to a certain degree, then he'll be able to transform into a thousand shapes. He can become whatever he wants to become.”

Li Qingshan nodded: “Since the Buddhists speak of [turning beauty into bones](#), they originally fully grasped the meaning of truth and illusion already. But this is probably not something that can be done overnight. Moreover that's only illusory transformation when all's said and done.”

As a reminder, the saying originally means to look beyond the superficial.

The green bull said: “There's another shortcut. Take human

hearts and pour the blood on him. It won't take long before the skeleton gives birth to muscles and restores flesh, remodeling a corporeal body."

Li Qingshan said in shock: "This way, won't it just be like reviving Little An?"

The green bull shook its head and said: "Not alive nor dead, not dead nor alive, but from the point of view of ordinary people, there's not much difference with a revival."

"Good!" Li Qingshan felt a burst of excitement.

"Don't be happy so early. You're the one who still need to do this troublesome matter. We can definitely not let him be exposed in front of everyone and leave too many traces behind, otherwise people will come to wipe out the devil and defend righteousness. Don't blame me for not reminding you."

Li Qingshan said resolutely: "I still wouldn't hesitate even if my body were polluted with bloodstains and had to bear this sin. Not to mention, the people in this world who ought to be killed and can be killed are too many to count."

Chapter 60: Accidentally Obtaining A Spiritual Weapon

The green bull didn't talk much further. He only said after Li Qingshan turned around: "You can cultivate the <Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist> when you go back. Cultivating the bull and not cultivating the tiger doesn't count as a supernatural skill yet."

Li Qingshan's body stiffened but his steps didn't stop. He would courageously press on no matter where this road led to. For himself, and also for the child in front of his eyes.

The green bull's entire attention was focused on Li Qingshan. It was also for Li Qingshan that he had conveniently taught the <Dao of the Beautiful Bones> to Little An. Would the <Strength of Nine Bulls and Two Tigers> he taught Li Qingshan truly be a mere clumsy and crude supernatural skill?

Li Qingshan searched for spoils of war inside the Black Wind Camp. Little An dragged his steps, "pa pa," and followed behind him. It didn't take him long to find the grain depot. The granary filled with food rations had been entirely pillaged from various villages in preparation for winter. No one would know how many common folks they'd caused to die of cold and hunger.

Later on he found a warehouse filled with various goods as well as a weapon depot. The warehouse was mostly filled with wine, meat, salt, this kind of things, while the weapon depot was filled with merely ordinary weapons. They couldn't match the edge of the Soaring Dragon Sword in his hands put together, so he didn't pay notice to them any further. But searching to and fro he

couldn't find the most important treasury. Instead, he found quite a bit of silver and silver notes in the various bosses' rooms.

The Black Wind Camp had been entrenched for many years in Suncheer and had accumulated who knew how much wealth and treasures. Maybe there were even magical talismans among them. It was still meticulous Little An who found an extremely well hidden mechanism in Xiong Xiangwu's room. A hidden door emerged when they triggered the mechanism.

Pearly rays of light and an atmosphere of precious treasures radiated from the money and items inside when they opened the secret door, almost dazzling the human eye. A wooden box was filled with a pile of silver notes, enough for at least ten thousand taels. But the most precious items were probably those antiques and paintings he couldn't name.

Even Li Qingshan's eyes felt a little dizzy. He could casually pick up something at random and appreciate it for half a day, magnifying the nature of a country bumpkin. He'd never seen so much wealth and treasures even adding his two lives together. However, he unfortunately didn't find any other talisman after searching around for a lap. Then he reflected that even if Xiong Xiangwu really had this kind of good things, he would also leave them on himself as trump cards instead of putting them in this kind of place to gather mold. But he couldn't help feeling some regrets.

Little An ignored those shiny gold and treasures. It seemed like he'd already had enough after playing with those weapons earlier. Instead he took out scrolls one by one from a great porcelain bottle

containing paintings and observed them. He didn't seem like he was amusing himself, but more like he was earnestly watching them. Some paintings he only took a glance at before throwing on the floor, disregarding them as if he'd recognized them as fakes.

Li Qingshan moved closer forward. He saw that those paintings were either landscapes of mountains and rivers, or flower and birds drawn with human figures. Or they were written from some weird calligraphy, and out of ten characters there were nine he couldn't distinguish. Anyway they were full of antique atmosphere and he couldn't see any difference.

He suddenly remembered that he could almost be counted as an illiterate in this world. There was neither the opportunity to study nor the necessity to study in the village, and he probably couldn't even recognize all the characters. He had to carefully make up for this deficiency when an opportunity arose. But still, he felt very amazed in his heart: "You understand them?"

Little An nodded. Although his mouth couldn't speak out words, he made a few gestures to Li Qingshan and Li Qingshan understood very quickly. Little An had originally remembered many things once again after reaching the beginning completion of the <Dao of the Beautiful Bones> and transforming into a skeleton.

Li Qingshan clicked his tongue: "Looks like you might quickly be able to remember where your home is. You can appreciate paintings and calligraphy at such a young age, there's certainly a deep relation with your studies at home. It could well be that they're more than an ordinary wealthy family."

Little An became confused instead when he heard Li Qingshan say this. Even if he was innocent and naive, he still knew that this appearance of his couldn't be shown to other people. Would he be able to see his family even if he returned to his hometown?

Li Qingshan said comfortingly: "Don't worry, I have my ways, you'll soon be able to become alright. I guarantee you won't be much different from other kids."

Little An rejoiced immediately. It just came from his instinctive trust, even if he had entirely no idea what Li Qingshan's method was.

The green bull heard them outside the door and sneered in its heart. Not only not an ordinary wealthy family, this little ghost's soul had clearly been purified and strengthened by learned people using great powers. It was the only reason it was so tough and could endure the witch's chaotic ghost refining without the soul scattering off, gaining the ability to manipulate objects instead.

Maybe Li Qingshan didn't know, but the green bull understood very clearly what a high level of innate talent was required by the <Dao of the Beautiful Bones>. Even it was a little surprised that Little An could cultivate it so smoothly. This was probably not due to mere intelligence and natural talent, but a spiritual wisdom that'd been opened thanks to some spiritual medicines or daoist technique.

Little An opened another painting. A patch of spiritual light suddenly rose inside the room and overshadowed all the glitter from the treasures and gold.

Li Qingshan felt a patch of cold in his heart, he felt an extremely sharp sword aura pierce his way. It was ten times more terrible even compared to that sure-kill sword strike from Yang Anzhi back in the restaurant. He instinctively grabbed Little An and covered him behind his body.

The painting dropped on the floor, but it didn't emit the terrible attack he'd imagined. Li Qingshan picked up the painting very carefully after a brief lull. He saw that it wasn't a painting that was drawn on the painting scroll, but handwritten calligraphy instead. It was flamboyant and extremely disheveled. He really couldn't recognize a single character.

It didn't look too much like [cursive script](#) either. The entire roll of characters didn't have any character shape at all, it was just random brushes and strokes. But the scroll was unexpectedly soaked through with power and had an extremely imposing aura. Every stroke resembled sword scars left on stone walls by a swordsman unrivaled in the world. There was a profoundness that couldn't be worn down even passing through the great changes of time.

The green bull said: "Kid, your luck isn't bad, you actually found a genuine spiritual weapon!"

"Spiritual weapon!" Li Qingshan felt delighted. He played with the scroll in his hands, his heart filled with happiness. He rubbed Little An's bony head: "What a really good boy Little An!"

Little An saw him happy and lowered his head, also extremely joyous.

“How do you use this thing?”

The green bull said: “Inject true qi inside and give it a try.”

Li Qingshan had mainly relied on his body’s strength during the great battle at the Black Wind Camp. The true qi in his body hadn’t been much consumed on the contrary, and there was more than half left. But it started to pour crazily like a torrent once he tried to inject it inside the painting scroll. The entire true qi left his body and was sucked inside the scroll.

A brush stroke brightened on the scroll only after the whole of his true qi had been sucked dry. A brilliant light flashed, and an “oblique stroke” flew out, passing by a treasure box containing silver and gold before falling on the secret room’s stone wall. There wasn’t any astonishing noise whatsoever. After a moment, the treasure box split into two sides.

Only then did Li Qingshan recover his mind and go forward for a look. The gold and silver ingots had all been split in two as long that “oblique stroke” had scratched past, the cross-cutting section neat and polished as a mirror. He went to examine the stone wall and discovered an extremely fine and deep scar on the thick stone wall.

“So this is a spiritual weapon’s power!” Li Qingshan swallowed a mouthful of saliva. Don’t mention the Bull Demon Skin Refining

he was so proud of, even Xiong Xiangwu's Strong Diamond Talisman could absolutely not block this strike. Moreover, he felt that this spiritual weapon hadn't even displayed a tenth of its power because the true qi in his body was insufficient. If he could rouse ten strokes at the same time out of the several dozen strokes on this scroll, what kind of might would that be!

Chapter 61: Murder And Arson

Li Qingshan finally understood why the green bull only showed contempt for that little knife firing off spiritual light in every direction, and was even dismissive of the Soaring Dragon Sword ordinary people saw as a divine weapon. They were indeed bottom level goods compared to genuine spiritual weapons.

If Xiong Xiangwu had used this spiritual weapon, then the one to die here today would have been him. But how could ordinary martial artists see the spiritual light. The antiques and paintings here hadn't been gathered by an uncouth fellow like Xiong Xiangwu anyway. It had been that second master dressed up as a scholar who'd noticed that this calligraphy was a little out of the ordinary. But where precisely it was out of the ordinary, he couldn't have said.

Even if they could see it was unusual, an martial artist's internal strength was entirely unable of using spiritual weapons. Xiong Xiangwu had to bite his tongue to use the talisman, only prompting it with his blood. Moreover, once rolled this scroll didn't leak out the slightest shred of spiritual light. Only then did Li Qingshan obtain this benefit at their expense.

The green bull said: "This spiritual weapon doesn't seem complete, it's just a part of it."

Li Qingshan took a look. Indeed, many strokes were interrupted at the edge, as if the scroll had been cut off by someone.

The green bull's vision was out of the ordinary: "This spiritual weapon doesn't look like it's been refined intentionally, but more like conveniently drawn on the spot, blending sword qi and sword might on the tip of the brush to rouse the sword qi. If you are of a mind to, it might even be possible to comprehend a set of sword art from it. Also, ordinary spiritual weapons would all be ruined once they're cut off. The one who penned this calligraphy really has some abilities."

Li Qingshan knew well the green bull's temperament. Its bullishness and arrogance was always soaring to the sky. Saying "has some abilities" was already an extraordinary assessment, so he closely examined this calligraphy even more carefully, trying to comprehend a sword technique from within.

He originally thought that since Shi Potian, with his illiterate status, could comprehend the <[Ode to Gallantry](#)> that even the crowd of heroes from the martial world couldn't figure out, then it was only right for a semi-illiterate like him to have some advantages. But he looked back and forth and came up empty-handed, only feeling that the scroll was more imposing the more he looked at it. He could only give up.

Reference to the wuxia novel Ode to Gallantry by Jin Yong. Shi Potian is the main character, while the Ode to Gallantry is a set of martial arts in this story. No one could decipher the manual because the secret was in the brush strokes and not the words, until Shi Potian the illiterate came along.

Little An stared at the scroll, his blood flames flickering without pause. He suddenly picked up a painting scroll from the ground and started moving as if dancing. A sudden gale rose in the treasure room, the rolled scroll carrying a blur with it as it emitted

the “sou sou” sound of breaking through the air. It seemed that what Little An held in his hand wasn’t a painting scroll, but a genuine treasured sword.

The appearance of a small skeleton holding a scroll and randomly moving about should originally have been strange and funny. But in Li Qingshan’s eyes, he could faintly see an elegant sword knight dancing with his sword, drawing to the four sides. He couldn’t help mumbling to himself: “Children’s fairy tales are all lies.”

What illiterates can learn martial arts faster, it’s all nonsense!

The green bull threw a sidelong glance to Li Qingshan and said clicking its tongue: “Perception!”

Li Qingshan thought that his own perception wasn’t that bad. He also progressed at a divine pace in the cultivation of his <Bull Demon Strong Fist>, and he’d even been praised by the green bull. If the problem wasn’t with him, then he could only say that Little An’s comprehension was high enough to go against the heavens. Of course, maybe it was also because he understood the calligraphy.

Little An finished dancing the last move and firmly took his sword back. The scroll disintegrated inch by inch, becoming fine powder. Then he looked in Li Qingshan’s direction. Although he couldn’t even make any expression, the blood flames clearly twinkled with a “hurry up and praise me” mood.

Li Qingshan rubbed his skeleton head: “Really smart!”

Little An rejoiced immediately. He saw that Li Qingshan had suffered a bit of a psychological blow, and wrote in his palm: “I’ll teach you!”

Li Qingshan smiled: “Alright then, looks like there’s a lot of things I have to learn. However let’s find a new home for you first!” He found a thick porcelain jar among those antique vases. He weighed it: “It seems too small.”

Little An split into separate bones and flew inside with a “Hua La La.” Li Qingshan jumped in fright. He looked inside the jar. A small skeleton, a bunch of blood flames happened to be watching him, full of expression.

Alright then, he originally thought that bringing up a small ghost was already weird enough, now it looked stranger and stranger. He said a “Good night!” and sealed the porcelain jar.

Li Qingshan lifted the jar and stuffed the silver notes into his bosom. He only brought this painting scroll outside. Then he closed this secret chamber once again. Finally he found some oil and sprinkled it on every building except the granary and the warehouse, then released a great fire.

Since ancient times, murder and arson were originally two peas in a pod already.

The fire spread fast even under the windy snow, and a great patch of fire soared in the space of a moment, shining Li Qingshan’s cheeks flush red.

Then Li Qingshan splashed oil and wine on the mountain of corpses. He couldn't know if someone else would be able to see some clues on those corpses whose blood essence had been absorbed by Little An, so he might as well set them on fire.

On the mountain path, the bandit-punishing troops finally neared the Black Wind Camp after a difficult journey through the night.

The horizon suddenly shone with a crimson red light just when Sick Yellow Tiger was thinking they were too late. His heart jumped: "Could it be?" He ordered immediately: "Speed up the march!"

Sick Yellow Tiger stared blankly as they crossed over a mountain ridge. Liu Hong also stared blankly, and even everyone who'd rushed over the mountain ridge together with them were speechless.

The insufferably arrogant and famously vicious Black Wind Camp was burning in raging flames at this moment, burning into a sea of fire.

"Could it be that all of this was done by that man alone?" This question rose in everyone's mind.

After the astonishment, the troops rushed with the fastest speed down the mountain ridge and reached the front of the Black Wind Camp. They crossed hesitatingly through the broken gates, then

they saw a scene they would definitely be unable to forget their whole lives.

Amidst a sea of fire, the great snow on the open area had been dyed bright red by the blood and the flames, with every kind of broken weapons stuck within. Li Qingshan sat recuperating in the center. Behind him was a burning mountain of corpses.

Four or five hundred men halted their steps. Sick Yellow Tiger and Liu Hong were no exception. This young man's body radiated a lofty aura that made people no dare to approach, just like a demon god.

Li Qingshan opened his eyes: "You came!" Two raging blazes reflected into his clear eyes, but it gave off the feeling that the raging blaze was burning forth from the bottom of his heart.

No one answered him!

Li Qingshan killed people and also released fires, and he also experimented with supernatural weapons. He'd cleanly exhausted his body's mental energy, stamina, and true qi, and he'd felt a burst of deep fatigue as soon as he'd sat down, so he simply sat and rested. Inside this sea of fire, this empty spot was precisely the best place to let him rest. Even he himself never expected that he'd give other people such a shock.

As an ordinary person, Ye Dachuan actually didn't sense as many things as Sick Yellow Tiger and Liu Hong. He went forward and said, "You... you did all this?" From beginning to end, his gaze

didn't dare to stop on the mountain of corpses behind Li Qingshan. The blazing hot sensation, the smell of grilled flesh, all of it made his head spin and his eyes dizzy.

Li Qingshan nodded and bounced up with a leap. "Li Qingshan leveled the Black Wind Camp herein. He didn't betray his commitment to the ordinary people of Crouching Bull Village, to my lord, and to himself!"

Sick Yellow Tiger and Liu Hong noticed those many crossbows among the weapons scattered on the ground. They had the best understanding of those things' fearfulness.

What's this martial arts that gave him this kind of energy in the end! Liu Hong searched his heart and knew he couldn't do the same as Li Qingshan. Even if those mountain bandits didn't move an iota and were neatly arranged in line to let him hit, he would still be worn out. Not even mentioning that the bandits were holding every kind of weapons, and there were also many masters standing guard to boot.

Liu Hong's gaze fell on the gourd at Li Qingshan's hips, believing he had guessed something, but he quickly moved his eyes away after crossing Li Qingshan's gaze.

Chapter 62: Murderous Intent Hiding To The Four Sides

“Many thanks to all of you for rushing to my rescue!” Li Qingshan gave his thanks to Ye Dachuan, Sick Yellow Tiger, and Liu Hong, one by one. Help was help no matter what kind of thoughts and goals they had. Their payback was the granary, warehouse, and weapon depot left by the Black Wind Camp.

As to that treasure chamber, it was originally extremely well hidden. After the burning of the great fire, even the secret door would also have burned down. If one wanted to go back inside, one could only move the debris away, find the exact location, and forcefully dig one’s way in.

Everyone sighed in relief and was all smiles among the great bandit-punishing army. They were originally deeply worried at heart, and thought they’d have to struggle desperately against the Black Wind brigands. Now they didn’t need to bloody their blades, and just had to transport the spoils of war without injuring a single hair. It was really great. They could still go brag to other people when they went back.

Ye Dachuan, Sick Yellow Tiger, Liu Hong, and Li Qingshan stood together as they watched the men transport the goods. They vaguely deferred to Li Qingshan as the leader.

Apart from the small wine gourd at Li Qingshan’s waist and the Soaring Dragon Sword on his back, there was an additional porcelain jar at his hips, and an additional painting scroll on his back.

What was packed inside the porcelain jar was naturally Little An. He'd sucked in so much blood essence from the bandits in one go and also needed some time to absorb and digest it. As to the painting scroll, it was the spiritual weapon he'd obtained. Because it was calligraphy and could also issue sword qi, he gave it the name of <Cursive Sword Script>.

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Those two things attracted the three persons' attention, but he didn't explain and no one breached discretion to ask. No matter what those were, they were already his spoils of war and he wouldn't tolerate others trying to get their share of it.

Li Qingshan said: "The chief hunter's wounds aren't too important I hope!"

Sick Yellow Tiger said: "Don't worry, my knives are precise, they won't leave any disability."

Li Qingshan froze an instant, then laughed loudly: "Indeed an old hand of the rivers and lakes." Man's heart was complex, it was moved by emotions and changed for profits. There was falsehood in truth and truth in falsehood. Rights and wrongs, grudges and gratitude, those were hard to distinguish clearly, and also didn't need to be distinguished clearly. Graces and grudges vanished entirely with a smile at a chance meeting.

Sick Yellow Tiger also laughed loudly, but he suddenly took his

laughter back: “The difficulties still lay ahead.”

Little Black came up and offered a ceremonial greeting to this man whose age wasn't greatly different from his. “I have let you down.” This scene today had thoroughly shocked him. How terribly would it be if this kind of man were to become the Horse Rein Village's enemy.

Li Qingshan patted his shoulder and walked out of the Black Wind Camp: “The sky will soon brighten!”

Apart from the layers and layers of red clouds, there was a gleam of light emerging from the east. The great fire gradually went out.

Li Qingshan suddenly stopped his footsteps. “That's right, chief hunter, did this Tiger Descending the Mountains nickname spread out from you?”

“Could be?” Sick Yellow Tiger didn't think he was going to talk about this.

“Can I change it?”

Sick Yellow Tiger froze, then smile wryly. Those nicknames were all passed down from the mouths of men of the martial world. He just chanced on the right opportunity at the right time, how did he have any qualification to change it.

Li Qingshan didn't know yet that he would very quickly gain a

new nickname.

Black Tiger, Black Tiger Li Qingshan.

Ye Dachuan felt deep deep regrets for being ultimately unable to find the Black Wind Camp's treasury, but he didn't even bat an eyelid outwardly. Once in a while his gaze would meet the adviser's, and it was all rapt excitement. "A great merit a great merit!"

Although it was all Li Qingshan's doings, Li Qingshan was still a constable he'd found, so this county magistracy of his wouldn't be short of contribution. He could already imagine the expression of that cheap brother-in-law who looked down on himself when he obtained those news.

"Hahahaha, the Black Wind Camp that countless magistrates were unable to pacify, this father leveled it as soon as he took office." Ye Dachuan laughed madly as he fiercely tapped Li Qingshan's shoulder, "Of course this is all constable Li's merit. I'll certainly make it known to the lord prefect, who happens to be also my brother-in-law. I'll commend your meritorious service, then get you promotions and riches, hahahaha."

Constable Li? Only then did Li Qingshan remember that he still had this title. He said with a smile, "Then I'll give many thanks for lord Ye's high praises."

"With pleasure, with pleasure!"

The great army set out and went back to the city. Li Qingshan had nothing to do and simply followed the troops as they slowly journeyed forward. Along the way, everyone found out that he wasn't as terrible as they'd imagined, and they gradually gathered around him, a bunch of them starting to call him young hero constable.

Li Qingshan had never experienced this sort of hero treatment and it also made him feel extremely good. Compared to the mediocrity of his previous life or the frustration of Crouching Bull Village, this was how a real man should live. He certainly didn't feign aloofness. What would he pretend to be indifferent to fame or fortune for. Not only he loved fame, he also loved wine and meat, loved beautiful women. Wine, lust, avarice and temper, he had all of the various sins and desires of the common masses.

Sick Yellow Tiger said his goodbyes in order to return to Horse Rein Village and get the tiger bone wine Li Qingshan wanted. Li Qingshan said: "Don't hesitate to send ginseng over if you have some, I'm willing to buy at high prices."

He could genuinely start to cultivate the <Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist> after settling matters here. Although the green bull didn't breathe a word of it, Li Qingshan still felt that there was some mystery he failed to grasp inside this seemingly ordinary supernatural skill.

Moreover, even if it were only an ordinary supernatural skill, it was still something that no martial arts could compare to, and it was extremely important to him. He loved fame, but his eyes weren't blinded by fame yet, and he wouldn't drunkenly forget

where he was. The present bustle was only the calm before the storm. More and greater challenges still lay ahead of him, and he would collapse in defeat if he didn't prepare himself in advance.

But not only he didn't feel fear, he became vaguely excited instead. He almost yelled, let the storm come a little fiercer then. This was the life he'd chosen.

Although the road was easy to walk on during daytime, they still couldn't go fast because they carried a great pile of heavy wagons. The contingent only reached the front of Suncheer City's gates at nightfall. They heard gongs and drums clamoring to the sky inside the city while firecrackers sang all together.

Li Qingshan said: "What festival is it today?"

Liu Hong said: "No, it's to welcome you in all likelihood. The lord magistrate sent out men in advance to notify them."

Indeed, a warm enthusiastic atmosphere assailed them when they entered inside the city. In this winter season, the great streets were actually crammed full of people.

The unfortunate events in Suncheer City last night had shocked everyone in the city, to the point that each of them was a little absent-minded during the day, until the news had come back. The city was boiling.

Li Qingshan smiled faintly and greeted the crowd. At the same

time, he acutely felt a few unkind gazes coming from a teahouse at the streetside. He thought: “They came really fast!”

“Hmph, a frog at the bottom of the well. He’s merely destroyed a mountain camp, that’s all. Apprentice brothers, when are we acting?” Said a woman clothed in blue in the teahouse. Her appearance was mediocre, but her haughtiness soared to the heavens.

“No hurry, let’s wait a little more!” The apprentice brother sitting facing her was a man over thirty years old with a long slim-shaped horse face. There wasn’t any surplus fat on his body, and his fingers were lanky. A bulging purse hung at his waist, and a radiant light flashed in his eyes. An old hand of the martial world would know at first glance that this was a concealed weapon master with exquisite internal strength.

“We caught up by chance. If we wait until the news spread out, I don’t know how many people would come to snatch. We might as well strike first and gain the upper hand.”

“He exterminated two hundred bandits with his own strength. If I ask myself honestly, then I couldn’t do it. The prestige of this tiger descending the mountains is blooming, he’s not easy to deal with.” The horse-faced man shook his head vigorously. It was a chance opportunity that they found themselves in this Suncheer City, and they were of a mind to pick up some benefits.

“You even believe this kind of outrageous rumors. I see he walks with heavy and cumbersome steps, while his [temples are flat](#). He’s nothing but an enduring external practitioner, he’s a peak second-

grade master at most, he can definitely not resist a first-grade. Let's join hands and greet him with concealed weapons, we'll take his little life in one go."

Swollen temples are supposedly signs of abundant internal strength in some wuxia novels.

Chapter 63: Tiger Demon Bone Refining

“One has to be cautious walking through the martial world. It’s preferable not to obtain the spirit ginseng rather than put yourself in danger. There are still other people here, let them feel him out first!” The horse-faced man’s assiduous teaching only met with a burst of contempt from the blue-clothed woman.

“The master said you have to listen to me about everything while we’re outside!” The horse-faced man also became angry. Don’t hesitate to go by yourself if you want to throw your life away, but don’t drag this daddy along with you. I’d have washed my hands off you long ago if you weren’t the master’s daughter.

He deeply felt the treacherousness of the martial world. They’d probably attract a fatal disaster even if they managed to snatch the spirit ginseng with a single moment of carelessness. This Li Qingshan should have offered this spirit ginseng out immediately if he were a smart man, otherwise he was dead for certain. No, even if he offered it out respectfully, the one who took it over would still certainly silence him for good to avoid the news leaking out and being chased by everyone.

The horse-faced man watched Li Qingshan among the group of people as if watching a dead man. He drank a mouthful of tea. Even if he couldn’t obtain the spirit ginseng, it would still be a beautiful thing to watch this kind of extremely lucky young heroic genius die inside this ruthless martial world.

Once again upstairs the restaurant where a fierce battle had been waged the previous night, Li Qingshan sat in the seat of honor and

received the nobles' terrified gazes, as well as cup after cup of fine wine. Suddenly, he stopped and watched the rippling liquid inside his cup when he was about to drink the wine.

The restaurant also quieted down following his actions. A nobleman asked cautiously, "Constable Li, is something the matter?"

Li Qingshan faintly said: "This wine is poisoned!" He casually splashed the wine on the floor, and a cloud of white smoke rose immediately. The violence of the poison was obvious to see. Moreover, this poison was colorless and tasteless, and he would have been poisoned already if he hadn't noticed the oddness of the wine thanks to his cautiousness and his opened spiritual eyes.

That nobleman's expression became pallid. It was him who'd filled Li Qingshan's cup of wine just now. He hurriedly waved his hands and said, "It's not me!"

Li Qingshan quickly stood up. The nobleman was about to yell out loud for someone to save his life when he saw Li Qingshan look at a waiter to the side: "You're the one who the poison right?" This was almost the sensitive reaction of a bestial intuition facing a murderous hostility.

"I don't think I've seen him before, he's not a waiter here," said a nobleman.

The waiter's facial expression became panicked. He cried injustice in a loud voice, but suddenly saw a fist hit his way. The

fist's wind assaulted his face first before the fist even landed, oppressing him until he couldn't breathe. He couldn't hide anymore and slipped out a short knife from within his sleeve, ruthlessly stabbing toward Li Qingshan's underbelly.

A muffled bang echoed, accompanied by the sound of fractured bones. The waiter's chest caved in as his corpse flew out of the building and landed on the street, his hand still tightly gripping the knife. The knife tip was bent.

Li Qingshan turned around and said as if nothing had happened: "Everyone keep drinking!" as if this couldn't even count as an aperitif.

But who could still keep drinking!

Li Qingshan said: "Lord Ye, Dragon Gate Sect's suzerain Yang Anzhi openly assaulted and tried to kill a government representative. Now he's fled without leaving a trace, should we list him as a criminal and issue a call for his arrest?"

Ye Dachuan said: "Right right right, I'll certainly mention this matter in the official documents to the lord prefect."

"We can't leave a den of brigands like the Dragon Gate Sect alone for long either. In the capacity of a constable, this one is willing to raze the Dragon Gate Sect and seize back Yang Anzhi. What does my lord think?"

The many nobles became terrified. The Dragon Gate Sect was probably going to follow in the Black Wind Camp's footsteps. It was fortunate they had immediately summoned back their families' disciples for the most part.

Ye Dachuan looked at the dark sky: "Isn't it too late?"

Li Qingshan said: "Many thanks for the lord's solicitude. I'll go for a bit and come back shortly!" He might as well find something to do since the drinking was ruined. He would certainly not let off the main culprit behind all of this, the Dragon Gate Sect, and give the enemy the opportunity to recover.

[Comrade Lei Feng](#) once instructed us: treat comrades with the warmth of spring, treat the enemy like the cruel and unfeeling winter.

A famous figure in modern Chinese culture, he's a communist soldier erected as a role model citizen after his death by a propaganda campaign from the communist party. Said to be unselfish, loyal etc and devoted to Mao and the party.

The Dragon Gate Sect was located on the Dragon Gate mountain ten miles away from the city. Li Qingshan left out of the city gates. He didn't travel on the main avenues, but identified the Dragon Gate's position and quickly walked in that direction in a straight line. Two black shadows followed behind as soon as he left the city gates. They weren't that pair of apprentice brother and sister.

They were martial world people who'd found themselves in Suncheer City's vicinity by coincidence and had accidentally heard

the news about the spirit ginseng. That waiter who'd poured the poison was precisely their companion. They'd stood watch below the restaurant all along, waiting for Li Qingshan to be poisoned to death and seize the spirit ginseng before running immediately far away. If that failed, the three of them would have acted together.

They'd waited until the waiter's dead body was thrown out, closely followed by Li Qingshan leaping out of the windows as he went straight outside the city. They'd shared a glance. "He wants to escape!" They couldn't help but follow behind.

The distance was ten miles in a straight line, but he needed to cross over mountain ridges all along the way, so it wasn't merely ten miles. Li Qingshan traveled in great steps, each step leaving a deep footprint behind. But he still had to slow down or stop a little when he came across gullies and ravines.

It seemed like it wasn't for no reason that people assessed his figure as heavy and clumsy, because the [Bull Demon Strong Fist] cultivated the body and didn't cultivate qi, so it had absolutely no ability to lighten the body and carry it with the wind. He was merely circulating his true qi to his feet out of instinct while he sped forward, to increase his speed a little.

But there was something a little special about him at this very moment. His spine twisted strangely and kept adjusting his posture as he ran, as if it was stretching his waist. His neck also twisted and turned without ceasing. He was even gasping for air in big mouthfuls and his heart beat like a drum while white mist rose from his body. It was actually the his sweat's vapor hanging in the air.

He originally ought to be able to run without the slightest effort, but he unexpectedly seemed to be bearing the greatest of burdens. His steps were increasingly faster however. There was an increasingly lithe feeling with each step that fell down. His body bent forward and his two arms sagged down, looking like a wild humanoid beast as he ran faster and faster through the forest.

The trees neared at flying speed inside the pitch-black forest, and were left behind him just as quickly.

There was suddenly a precipitous mountain slope forty to fifty feet tall in front of him. The him from before would certainly have stopped his steps and thought about how to wind around it, or perhaps climb up.

But at this moment, he not only didn't stop, he accelerated and charged toward the slope instead. His body lowered as soon as he reached the foot of the mountain slope, then he stamped his feet down and soared upward. His hands stretched out and grabbed two protruding rocks, then he leaped up the slope with another burst of strength.

The entire movement had flowed smoothly in one go, just like a fierce tiger climbing the mountain and crossing ridges. This style was precisely the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist]'s "Tiger Demon Mountain Climb."

The green bull had already passed the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] onto Li Qingshan. He had been mulling over the

methods and techniques within all during the way back to Suncheer. It was indeed much easier with the accumulation from the [Bull Demon Strong Fist], and he'd quickly grasped the methods within. What he had been using and experimenting with as he ran were the three most basic styles within the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist], "Tiger Demon Spine Shift," "Tiger Demon Waist Stretch," and "Tiger Demon Head Bump." Those were the basis of the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist]'s strength refining and energy flow, and the other techniques all had their foundations within.

He only understood now why the green bull had him train to a strength of one bull before he let him cultivate the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist], because its burden on the body was simply too great. If he'd cultivated the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] from the start, he'd probably have cultivated his body into collapsing.

Chapter 64: Tiger Demon Heart Scoop

But the body's burden becoming greater wasn't only not a bad thing, it was instead a great thing. Although the [Bull Demon Strong Fist] bestowed strength, endurance, and defensive abilities that were out of the ordinary, he still often felt it was a little wasteful.

If your speed wasn't fast enough, even a great strength would be in vain if you couldn't land your hits. Hence he had to put his body in danger when facing Yang Anzhi.

Of course a powerful endurance could support you for longer, but what was important during fights to the death were the myriad of changes happening within an instant short like the fleeting flash of lightning sparks. If one strike didn't land, evade a thousand miles away. How many opportunities for great wars of three days and three days would you get.

A tough defense could bully masters who used their fists, but if they used the sharp edges of treasured swords, then it would be the so called "needle piercing through a bull's hide" and he wouldn't be able to block then. It was always better to hit people than to be hit anyway.

The [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] solved those problems in a fundamental way. It could let him burst out his power and physical strength in the space of an instant. It greatly increased his speed.

Apart of the "Tiger Demon Mountain Climb", there were another

two forceful movement techniques in the Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist, “Tiger Demon Stream Leap” and “Tiger Demon Mountain Descent.” It included every style from jumps upward to leaps downward, from rushes forward to retreats backward. It was truly like a fierce tiger crossing through the forest, coming and going like the wind.

Li Qingshan stopped his steps and allowed his madly beating heart to slowly calm down. He closed his eyes to comprehend the sensations just now. At the same time, he was also waiting.

The two shadows’ movement techniques were actually decent, and they walked out of the woods after just a moment. They saw Li Qingshan on the mountain slope at one glance with the help from the reflection of the bright snow. They felt a violent and dangerous atmosphere at the same time.

Li Qingshan crossed his hands in greeting and stood up straight: “Two third-grade masters also dare to chase me. You really have brave guts. Since you came, leave your lives behind!” From stillness, he turned around in a flash without waiting for the two to answer, his whole person pouncing down.

“Tiger Demon Mountain Descent!”

“Tiger Descending the Mountains Li Qingshan.” Those two persons remembered Li Qingshan’s nickname at the same time. It wasn’t only Li Qingshan who thought this nickname didn’t sound great to the ears, even they had felt it was laughably crude the first time they’d heard it. But no one could laugh when the black shadow befell on them.

They only hated themselves for listening to the rumors and deluding themselves because of their greed. They hadn't thought that a greenhorn kid like Li Qingshan would be unexpectedly so strong. Yang Anzhi spread out the matter about the spirit ginseng, but he'd never talk about the ugly affair of him being beaten. Meanwhile, Li Qingshan's achievement of leveling the Black Wind Camp by himself was too excessively odd, so they hadn't any faith in it. They only saw Li Qingshan return to the city together with two famous masters and several hundred men.

It was already too late to think about fleeing.

"Tiger Demon Heart Scoop!" Li Qingshan's hands spread open like claws and thrust into the two men's chests. With a grab and a pull, he scooped out two blood-red hearts. The hearts were still throbbing bang bang.

There were the three basic strength refining and strength handling moves "Tiger Demon Spine Shift," "Tiger Demon Waist Stretch," and "Tiger Demon Head Bump," as well as the three forceful motion techniques "Tiger Demon Stream Jump," "Tiger Demon Mountain Climb," and "Tiger Demon Mountain Descent." Apart from those, the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] also had three moves purely made to injure and kill, distinguished as "Tiger Demon Heart Scoop," "Tiger Demon Sheep Tear," and "Tiger Demon Wild Hiss." It was many times more savage than the [Bull Demon Strong Fist].

"Little An, come!"

The porcelain jar opened and Little An flew out from within. The red color on his body had become fainter, and there was only a layer of pale red left. He'd almost recovered the appearance of a white skeleton. Li Qingshan used strength and squeezed. Fresh blood dripped down, dropped on the skeleton bones, and penetrated inside in the space of an instant.

This was the so-called heart blood of living men. Such a way of cultivating had reached an extreme level of evil and terror.

But Li Qingshan actually didn't feel the slightest shred of discomfort, and not only because there was no wrong in killing those two men who wished to plot against his life. A merciless elation welled up from the bottom of his heart as he smelled the thick scent of blood. The red light in the depths of his eyes also shone more dazzlingly.

In the eyes of ordinary men, a bull had always been a comparatively honest and docile creature. Admittedly it also had its irascible moments, but it still couldn't be compared to the tiger that killed as a way of life. It was the same when it came to fist techniques named after those two wild animals.

If the [Bull Demon Strong Fist] merely increased the body's bravery, then the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] thoroughly aroused the vicious and murderous facets within his heart. Good fighters liked to fight and good killers liked to kill, nothing else would be more of a common sense in the world.

Li Qingshan rubbed Little An 's head with a hand still covered in fresh blood, saying gently: "Come out breathe some fresh air!" He

didn't know how a skeleton would really breathe fresh air, but Little An still climbed happily on Li Qingshan's shoulders.

Li Qingshan rushed away, unaware of the two other persons that caught up not long after. They were the horse-faced man and the blue-clothed woman from the teahouse. The two were people who often traveled the rivers and lakes when all was said and done, and those pampered sons of the Dragon Gate Sect couldn't compare to them. Even the blue-clothed woman only blanched slightly when she saw the scene.

“Hmph, the three killers of the Yao clan, even those three trashes dare to have ideas about the spirit ginseng. Brother, he went out of the city to break into the Dragon Gate Sect, this is a good opportunity for us. After both sides suffer from the fight, we'll be like [the oriole lurking behind](#). We'll leave as soon as we take the spirit ginseng, no one will...”

The oriole lurking behind is part of the Chinese idiom “The mantis stalks the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind,” meaning pursuing something while unaware of the greater danger lurking behind.

“Shut your mouth!” The horse-faced man was crouched down and examining the corpses. He interrupted with an ashen face when he heard the woman's stratagem. “Let's leave, we're leaving right now, the farther away we leave the better!”

The blue-clothed woman shouted: “What are you saying?”

“Although the three killers of the Yao clan can't amount to any

extraordinary figure, they still have some firm skills. Leaving aside the third killer who's expert in poisons, the first killer and the second killer both have decent martial arts. Even I would need to exert some effort if the two of them joined hands. But now, while they were on their guards, they couldn't even go through a single "[Black Tiger Heart Scoop](#)" move and died with their hearts dug out. This Li Qingshan isn't someone we can deal with. The rumors about the Black Wind Camp may be true." The horse-faced man spoke calmly, but his voice was faintly shaking. He could imagine what would be the outcome be if he were to be instigated into acting.

The Black Tiger Heart Scoop is a move of the Heihuquan, or "Black Tiger Fist," a Chinese martial arts descended from northern Shaolin kung fu.

"We're originally hidden weapon stealth attackers, don't tell me we'll exchange moves with him face to face? There's no obstacle as long as we can pull away with our movement techniques. Elder brother, your guts are really too small. There's no fortune without danger, if we obtained that spirit ginseng..." The blue-clothed woman chattered on and on. Her eyes shone especially bright when mentioning the spirit ginseng.

"Pa." A crisp and clear slap on the face. The blue-clothed woman covered her face with disbelief: "You actually dare to hit me?"

The horse-faced man said: "Go by yourself if you want to throw your life away, don't drag this father along. Even if you tell master when we go back, we'll see whether master punishes me or praises me!" He flung his arms after saying his words and went away.

The blue-clothed woman froze a moment, but still caught up to him: “Elder brother, how can you be like this!”

The Dragon Gate mountain towered unwavering on the earth. It had a steep topography, and was surrounded on three sides by precipices, especially the precipice of several thousand feet straight from top to bottom on the eastern side. It looked like the hack of a blade or the chop of an ax. Even apes or monkeys would have trouble climbing it.

But at this moment, a patch of darkness on the eastern cliff twinkled with a star-like fire light that flew up at high speed.

Watching carefully, it was unexpectedly a shadow climbing the cliff, its ten bent fingers fastened on the rocks like iron claws, sputtering spark after spark. It was precisely Li Qingshan.

Chapter 65: Stand Tall And Look Far Away

Li Qingshan had dashed madly across the mountain forests after killing those three Yao clan killers, nothing hindering him any longer. He crossed rivers when he met them and he climbed mountains when he came across them, operating the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] with increasing ingeniousness. He'd reached the foot of the precipice on the eastern side of the Dragon Gate mountain in less than two hours, the tall mountain stuck erect like a sharp sword. His mind thought it over for an ephemeral moment, then his body and mind skimmed toward the cliff at increased speed.

The strong winds whistled against his ears a thousand feet over the ground, but he turned a deaf ear to them. His eyes were like needle points as they roamed tensely over the cliff, searching for a protruding rock he could grasp. Even an extremely small protrusion was enough for him to exert his strength, and when he found none, he just clawed fiercely into the cliff.

If we consider the precipice as a flat land, then Li Qingshan would be a great tiger with his waist bent like a bow and his four limbs touching the ground. He would then seem to be treading free and unobstructed on land. Only he was aware that he was walking on thin ice and putting his body in much danger. Even a tiny mistake would make him drop from a thousand feet above, then his bones would be shattered to pieces even if he had muscles of steel and bones of iron. The danger wasn't the least inferior compared to charging into the Black Wind Camp.

But there was no fear in his heart; it was hot-blooded and impassioned instead. The extreme level of danger squeezed out the

whole of his potential out of his body. His spirit, determination, and vigor, all attained a peak never reached before.

He finally understood where those mountain climbers who braved tall peaks at the risk of their lives derived their pleasure from, why some people liked extreme sports. To challenge untold dangers and difficulties, to achieve undertakings others couldn't achieve, it was precisely the instinct and nature of hot-blooded men.

He ignored the signals of exhaustion that came continuously from his organism, and also disregarded the groans of his bones about to be unable to endure. His body operating at overload brought a kind of pleasure instead. It was as if his soul had been set free, and he was soaring in the air.

A valley surrounded by cliffs suddenly appeared in front of his eyes. He leaped up and saw halls one after another. He suddenly realized then this wasn't a valley but the summit. The world once again shifted back in place in his brain. He half-knelt above the overhanging cliff, then stood up and looked back. The ranges of mountains were like beasts.

The tiny Suncheer City sat inside the ring of this group of beasts, almost as if in danger of being torn to shred by them at any moment. This wasn't a world that could leave people to live in peace; it was flooded with unimaginable dangers.

He'd grumbled countless times, living for more than a dozen years inside Crouching Bull Village. He'd missed those rooms that were comfortable to live in from his former world, all the various

foods one could eat, the easy life where you could just spend a whole day in front of a computer. Even after the appearance of the green bull that had given him a power that could be called formidable, he was still hesitating as to which life was truly better out of those two in comparison.

He only obtained the answer tonight, all of a sudden. He severed the last thread of hesitation and opened his arms wide, as if he wanted to embrace this world. “This is truly the life I want, this place is an adventurer’s paradise!”

His clothes made flapping sounds under the blowing of the austere cold wind. He broke off with the past of his previous world above this precipice, with those dreams he had been tangled into for fifteen years.

I am Li Qingshan, Li writte L and I, Qingshan meaning [Green Hill](#).

The original text says I am Li Qingshan, Li (李) character written from wood (木) and seed (子), Qingshan (green hill) from “when life is up and down a green hill”

Little An also climbed up from the porcelain jar and looked meekly at Li Qingshan. He didn’t know Li Qingshan’s inner thoughts, but he seemed to have sensed the determination inside his chest, and silently said within his heart: “No matter where you go, I will walk together with you to the end!”

Li Qingshan turned back resolutely and walked towards those buildings and halls. Those were precisely the Dragon Gate Sect’s

location.

The time was already late, but the Dragon Gate Sect's Soaring Dragon Hall was still brightly lit.

The Dragon Gate Sect's suzerain Yang Anzhi sat on the main seat. Beside him was a pale-white faced Yang Jun with an expression full of bitter rancor. The sect's elders and core disciples were separated in two sides, their faces all heavy. Not one of them spoke.

Even the flush red fires from the stoves couldn't warm their hearts.

Li Qingshan had destroyed the Black Wind Camp. The news were like a huge boulder that pressed down on everyone's chests. The Dragon Gate Sect was also out of the ordinary. Li Qingshan had returned to Suncheer City at nightfall, and the news had already reached the Dragon Gate Sect the same night; one could say it had been fast.

Yang Jun snarled with a twisted expression: "This is impossible, it's certainly rumors. There's only been one day, and the Black Wind Camp isn't made of paper, how could it be destroyed?!"

"Jun'er, no need to say any further. It's Suncheer City who gathered a large army, and there was also Liu Hong and Sick Yellow Tiger who joined hands. There's nothing surprising about the Black Wind Camp being destroyed, I just didn't expect it to be so fast!" Yang Anzhi was worthy of being a sect leader. He could still maintain some calm after hearing about those big changes.

An elder said: “I didn’t think Liu Hong and Sick Yellow Tiger would join hands to help this kid. Brother sect leader, what should we do now? Many nobles have recalled back their children.”

“What helping that kid, it’s just for the Black Wind Camp’s wealth and treasures. They won’t leave the Dragon Gate Sect alone, this is simply an unprecedentedly huge calamity for my Dragon Gate Sect!”

The Dragon Fist Sect had been established many years ago. Although it couldn’t amount to any great sect within the martial world, it could still be considered to have deep foundations inside Suncheer City. The collusion of martial arts with influence was an absolute ruling power. This moment resembled a comfortable local tyrant who’d suddenly heard that the whole world had turned upside down. It was almost the feeling of the end of days creeping near.

“Brother suzerain, I’ve said long ago we should restrain the sect disciples and not let them commit outrages. This kind of running amok will provoke a strong enemy sooner or later, and cause a great calamity for our Dragon Gate Sect.” The punishment hall elder spoke to Yang Anzhi, but his eyes were watching Yang Jun’s face. There was also much blame on other people’s faces.

“Old thing, what nonsense are you sprouting. When that stupid son of yours raped someone else’s wife, and those people came knocking at our door, who stuck out their head for you then!” Yang Jun flew into a rage. He wouldn’t have possibly talked to an elder like this either in ordinary times, but he’d suddenly lost his

martial abilities, and even the Dragon Gate Sect that protected him was possibly facing an imminent crisis, so his state of mind wasn't normal and he didn't have any scruple left.

“You!” The punishment hall elder's face turned red.

“Everyone shut the hell up!” Yang Anzhi's voice echoed in the great palace with a buzzing hum. One couldn't underestimate his internal strength. “Is now the time for infighting? No matter what happened in the past, the top priority now is to answer the crisis in front of us. I've already sent disciples to guard the mountain paths and transmit news with torches. Absolutely no one could hide from us if they mounted a large scale attack on the mountain. If we really can't resist, we can only take our savings with us and retreat through the Ancestor Hall's secret path in advance. We'll give up the Dragon Gate mountain but preserve our power.”

The Dragon Gate Sect was a sect with an inheritance going back several generations when all was said and done. Apart from those pampered sons from the noble families, it still had quite a few loyal disciples in exercise. But those disciples couldn't expect that their sect leader was already planning on giving them up.

Give up the Dragon Gate mountain! Everyone inside the hall was stunned. They'd thought of this worst possibility, but they still couldn't accept it when they suddenly heard.

“I'm only talking about the worst possible eventuality, and it's also merely a temporary plan. I've already sent letters to every righteous sect and evil sect of the martial world. The news about the spirit ginseng are already known by all. Suncheer City will be

crammed full of people from the martial world in not long of a time. Not only is that kid on the road to his death, it's possible even Liu Hong and Sick Yellow Tiger will die a violent death. As long as we preserve our strength, it won't take long for us to come back even stronger."

"What a good plan by suzerain Yang!" Li Qingshan pushed open the thick door screens and stepped inside the hall, carrying wind and snowflakes with him. His gaze pierced Yang Anzhi like a sword: "I was originally afraid you'd run, but now I'm relieved. Whether I'm on the road to death remains to be seen, but you're dead for certain." It seemed as if the people filling the hall were all lambs to the slaughter.

Chapter 66: Killing The Dragon Gate In A Blink

Yang Anzhi's face greatly changed. He actually hadn't noticed Li Qingshan's arrival in the slightest. Li Qingshan's footsteps were already not heavy and clumsy in the least, they were now lithe and silent like a feline instead.

The other elders and disciples were still wondering, who was this! Yang Jun roared, "Li Qingshan!"

The crowd filling the hall stood up and put their hands on their swords all together without prior consultation. Everyone started talking at once in a burst of noisy disarray: "What the bloody hell are those disciples guarding the mountain doing." "How did you come up?" "Who else are there? All of you come out!"

"You don't need to care about how I came up. Today there's only the one of me who came!" Li Qingshan looked around and saw many people present he didn't know. He said, "I came today merely to put the chief evil to death. Other people all exit the hall if possible, [I'll give you the time of a cup of tea](#)." He moved his body and stepped away from the the hall's doors behind him, but what answered him was the "shua shua shua" of drawn swords. The awe-inspiring sword glints flickered without pause.

This has been mentioned before but I forgot to make a note about it. The "time for a cup of tea" is a measure of time in ancient China you'll often find in Chinese novels. It's around 10 to 15 minutes.

The punishment hall elder said: "Truly, the heavens gave you a

road but you don't walk on it. Truly, there's no door to hell but you break inside. You actually dare to sneak up the mountain all by yourself, do you really think my Dragon Gate Sect is so good to provoke?" He was in charge of punishments and was well-known even inside the Dragon Gate Sect for his callousness. He looked at Li Qingshan as if he were looking at a sinning disciple he was in charge of.

"Kill him, he's my Dragon Gate Sect's great foe!" "The Dragon Gate Sect wouldn't be here today if it weren't for him. He actually dares to send himself to our doors." "We can't let him off easy, I have to cut off his hands and feet!"

The crowd that was originally on the verge of infighting united with a common goal facing the emergence of this "main criminal" Li Qingshan. They wanted to pour all the anger inside their chests over his body. They hated they couldn't slice him into mincemeat or dismember his body into ten thousand pieces.

In their imagination, the Li Qingshan who'd come alone was already meat on the chopping block, waiting for their slaughter.

There was only Yang Anzhi who didn't breathe out a word as he held his sword hilt tight. He'd sensed the changes inside Li Qingshan. The Li Qingshan from before was like a confused iron rod, and he was still short of variations and sharpness even if his strength was deep. But the present Li Qingshan seemed to have had an edge polished out of him. The exposed edge made people sit up and take notice.

Li Qingshan said with a calm expression, "Then the Dragon Gate

Sect will be the next Black Wind Camp!” A murderous intent rose inside his heart and an aura of death gushed out of his entire person, pressuring every man of the Dragon Gate Sect.

What a heavy murderous aura!

Everyone felt a chill in their heart. They felt as if the temperature in the hall had lowered by a few degrees. It was even more so for Yang Jun who’d lost his martial abilities; he almost went soft and dropped on the floor.

Li Qingshan took this opportunity and used a “Tiger Demon Stream Leap” to pounce on the Dragon Gate disciple closest to him, reaching the distance of a dozen steps in one pounce. He clawed with a “Tiger Demon Heart Scoop.” His five fingers broke through the air with a fierce hiss, scaring men’s galls.

A lion used all its strength to seize a rabbit, never relying on its superiority, never speaking nonsense with the enemy.

That disciple didn’t expect Li Qingshan to act so abruptly. He couldn’t even display half his body’s power amidst his terror. He helplessly watched Li Qingshan’s hand-claws enter his chest, dig out a heart dripped with blood, and toss it away casually.

Little An climbed out and caught the heart in his hands before absorbing the blood within. Ever since he’d learned from Li Qingshan there was an opportunity to restore a body of flesh and blood, he’d done this thing with the attitude of completing a divine ritual.

Little An's flames inside his eye sockets flashed as they swept past the men inside the great hall. He merely needed to kill this group of men to be one step closer to his goal! No matter the price he had to pay, he wanted to appear in front of him with a body of flesh and blood anew.

The men of the Dragon Gate Sect had originally already reacted by the time Li Qingshan had killed that disciple, but their steps once again came to a sudden halt. They watched this strange scene with fright. A skeleton stood besides the light of the stoves' fire and held a human heart in its hands in order to swallow it. A word bubbled forth from their hearts: "De... demon!"

Since Little An didn't possess the ability to conceal his form anymore, then there was no need to hide. Li Qingshan pulled out the Dragon Gate Sect's ancestral legacy, the Soaring Dragon Sword, and stuck it inside the ground: "I've long heard that the Dragon Gate Sect became famous thanks to its sword arts. Little An, come ask them for advice!"

Little An threw the heart down and grabbed the Soaring Dragon Sword. This sword was a little too big and too long for him, but his entire momentum changed as soon as he held the sword hilt, the sharp point of the sword pointing obliquely like a matchless fencer. Each and every one of the Dragon Gate Sect felt they had already been shrouded inside the sword's momentum.

The punishment hall elder's face became pallid. He no longer had his self-confidence from before. As a sword sect, they were still knowledgeable when it came to sword techniques, no matter their

conduct.

The man who'd left behind the aura and meaning of the sword on the painting scroll was a man who could draw a spiritual weapon and obtain the green bull's praise. Even if Little An had merely comprehended a part of the sword technique within, it was still superior to every sword technique from a second-grade sect like the Dragon Gate Sect.

The marble tiles under Li Qingshan's feet suddenly broke, his person already vanished from where he had stood. He once again used the "Tiger Demon Stream Leap" and aimed directly at the Dragon Gate Sect's suzerain Yang Anzhi, without paying attention to anyone else in the great hall.

Yang Anzhi said with a great shout, "Kill him!" His voice shook awake everyone in the hall. They were also swordsmen who'd studied the sword for many years, they wouldn't truly be intimidated. They knew they'd arrived at a moment that would decide life or death, and their eyes became red as they gave all the strength they had. More than ten beams of sword qi stabbed like rainbows toward the Li Qingshan who was still in mid-air and who couldn't borrow strength from anywhere.

Li Qingshan didn't dodge nor hide. He didn't even spare a glance for those sword lights. His eyes shrank into needle points as he stared straight at Yang Anzhi, just like a ruthless beast.

Yang Anzhi's sword finally left its sheathe. It was actually yet another treasured sword flashing with spiritual light, and although it was slightly inferior to the Soaring Dragon Sword, it could still

slice metal and cut jade. It transformed into seven sword shadows, drawing seven sword flowers as it attacked Li Qingshan. Even if the other swords couldn't pierce Li Qingshan's skin, this sword was certainly capable of settling Li Qingshan's life.

Little An leaped up when Li Qingshan was about to act. The Soaring Dragon Sword likewise transformed into seven sword shadows and drew seven sword flowers as it clashed together with Yang Anzhi's sword, producing a series of acute "ding dang."

The crowd of Dragon Gate elders and disciples were frozen stiff like sculptures behind Little An. They were still in the middle of their stabbing motion in Li Qingshan's direction when fresh blood madly sprayed out at the same time from terrible lines of injury on their necks, chests, or between their eyebrows. They fell to the ground.

When Li Qingshan had acted, Little An had grabbed the Soaring Dragon Sword and acted at the same time. He had actually pressed close to the floor as he went through the great hall. He'd taken advantage of the wide open opportunity of everyone pouring their whole strength into attacking Li Qingshan and instantly killed every elder and disciple before meeting Yang Anzhi's sword.

He wasn't a little child, but a demon cultivator who cultivated a supernatural skill from the way of the demon. The Soaring Dragon Sword wasn't a toy either, but a fearsome lethal weapon that could take away human lives.

Li Qingshan had once said back when Little An had reached the beginning completion of the [Dao of the Beautiful Bones] that he

probably could raze the Black Wind Camp by himself. He only saw today what kind of strength he'd reached after comprehending the sword art on the spiritual weapon and using a sharp weapon like the Soaring Dragon Sword. "This kid!"

The two men's martial ability had both gradually transcended the realm of second-grade masters. This was after all the martial world, and the layering of numbers had almost no effect at all under the oppression of absolute martial skills.

A treasured sword flew up with a "clang" and nailed itself into a crossbeam inside the great hall. Yang Anzhi's covered with his hand the broken skin between his thumb and index as he hurriedly retreated back, his pale face without any trace of blood. He didn't have the might of a sect suzerain anymore: "What kind of thing are you!" How would he be able to match Little An's strength

Chapter 67: Killing Stab Of The Flying Sword

Yang Anzhi watched the hall full of corpses. The Dragon Gate Sect's inheritance had actually been severed under his hands within the turn of an eye.

All because Li Qingshan had been a weakling in his eyes back then. To deal with a weakling wasn't called provocation, it was called grasping. Only today, he had become the object of grasping instead.

Yang Anzhi had actually escaped from death by clashing swords with Little An. He'd avoided Li Qingshan's full-powered charge at the right time, otherwise Li Qingshan had some confidence he could have seen what color his heart was painted with, relying on the wide range of his moves. Meanwhile, Little An had first killed a dozen persons on his way before sending Yang Anzhi's treasured sword flying. He had been an arrow at the end of its flight and hadn't been able to recover in such a short time.

"Dad, save me!" Yang Jun didn't have a single shred of his arrogant and threatening attitude left as he watched the two "monsters" almost within reach. He stretched out his hands toward Yang Anzhi and begged for help with a face full of fear.

Yang Anzhi didn't manifest the slightest intent of stopping his steps as he skimmed like smoke toward the rear of the hall. He could birth another son, but there was only one of his life. It was indeed like a warrior severing his wrist to save his life, truly ruthless.

Yang Jun became instantly desperate. He closed his eyes and felt a strong gale rush his way, but there wasn't any sense of pain. He opened his eyes and saw Li Qingshan and Little An brush past his body and chase straight after Yang Anzhi, not even sparing him a glance.

Yang Anzhi's movement technique was outstanding. It would be difficult to catch up to him once he fled far away.

Yang Jun disregarded his heavy clothes soaked through with cold sweat and immediately moved his legs after escaping from the great catastrophe, dashing madly outside, repeatedly harping inside his heart: I will definitely take revenge! I will definitely take revenge!

"Puff!" A bone hand inserted itself into his back and ran him through. Yang Jun watched his chest with disbelief, still going forward a few steps before falling onto the floor with a "bang."

It was originally Little An who saw he wanted to escape. He'd swung his left arm, the bony arm flying out like a concealed weapon and killing him.

The bone arm flew toward the rear of the hall as if under the influence of an invisible traction.

Behind the great hall was precisely the Dragon Gate Sect's Ancestor Hall that enshrined the portraits of the successive suzerains of the Dragon Gate Sect. The first suzerain's portrait was the biggest one, close to 10 feet, a tall swordsman painted on it

holding the Soaring Dragon Sword and overlooking the entire Ancestor Hall with an indifferent expression.

Legends said he saw bandits running rampant and massacring the innocent when he came to Suncheer. He'd killed his way inside the den of brigands all by himself and killed them to the last. He had been nicknamed "Soaring Dragon Swordsman." His rise to fame shared a little similar tune with Li Qingshan. The common folks and the nobles of Suncheer were all deeply grateful and invited him to stay, thus he established a sect on the Dragon Gate mountain and passed down his martial learning, founding this "Dragon Gate Sect."

But he'd probably never envisioned the present scene. No, perhaps he'd imagined it. The Dragon Gate Sect's secret passage was built precisely behind the offering table under his portrait. One only needed to drill inside to pass through the belly of the mountain and escape from lethal danger to an exit known to no one. This was Yang Anzhi's goal.

Yang Anzhi self-confidence in his movement technique was under continuous assault from the sound of the wind coming increasingly nearer behind him. In the next moment, he would share the same outcome as those disciples and elders in the great hall.

There was no telling if his state of mind had become chaotic due to his fear, but he actually yelled out loud, "Ancestral master save my life!"

Li Qingshan immediately took back the hand turned into claws

he had probed toward the center of Yang Anzhi's back. He worried Yang Anzhi had a trump card exceeding ordinary martial artists just like Xiong Xiangwu. The way he saw it with his present experience, goods belonging to the category of spiritual devices or means resembling daoist magic weren't uncommon in this world.

Those means may be very weak, or they may also be very strong. There was no way to be certain in advance.

Indeed, a small consecrated sword on the offering table suddenly lit up with bright light and stabbed through the air toward Li Qingshan before Yang Anzhi's voice had even fallen.

Even if this small sword radiated with glorious light, one could still see at a glance it was a wooden sword under the golden lacquer. But it radiated astonishing sword light at this moment, brightly lighting the whole of the pitch black Ancestor Hall under its shine as it turned into a golden beam of rainbow.

The sword was still several dozen feet away but Li Qingshan already felt a little stabbing pain between his eyebrows. Another feeling rose inside him, as if he would be unable to avoid the pierce of this sword no matter how he tried to dodge.

Yang Anzhi relaxed somewhat. This was an untold secret only known by the successive Dragon Gate Sect suzerains. When their first ancestor had passed away, he hadn't left a corpse behind but just this small sword. This was absolutely what the taoists called "[weapon remains](#)." The then head disciple, also Yang Anzhi's ancestor, had once been exhorted to worship this sword every day without slack. They could summon its help in case of invasion by a

strong enemy and turn peril into safety, but it could only be used once.

The author is probably twisting/doing a wordplay on Chinese legends as usual. From my understanding, “weapon remains” can be a generic term for when a taoist dies from a weapon. Some legends call “weapon remains” when a taoist is beheaded so he can discard his mortal flesh and ascend to the heavens, or when a taoist kills himself after failing a heavenly tribulation for example so he can return to his primordial soul and seek another body.

Although Yang Anzhi had also followed suit and worshiped it for several decades, he originally didn't believe this rumor. He'd also examined this small sword; it was but the most ordinary of wooden swords, and any iron sword would cleave it into two halves.

But at the same time he didn't dare not believe either. He'd already thought about how to put it to use. But then he thought about the Iron Fist Gate and Horse Rein Village joining force together with those soldiers commanded by the county; they would inevitably launch a large scale attack on the mountain. What kind of decisive role a sword that could only be used once could play when a thousand men were rushing up. It had to come to this crisis of life and death before he finally gave it a desperate try. It actually truly succeeded.

Li Qingshan also knew he couldn't meet it frontally. His body flipped around high in the air. That small sword seemed to be possessed of spiritual intelligence and twisted itself in the middle of its flight, producing the fierce hiss of breaking through air. With a “sou,” it once again flung itself like lightning toward Li Qingshan. Li Qingshan felt the sensation become fiercer on the spot between his eyebrows as the cold air blew on his face.

A sword suddenly swept over, stabbing on the small sword's blade. Little An had acted to rescue Li Qingshan. This sword strike of his was fully sufficient to pierce metal and stab through stone, but not only it couldn't break this small wooden sword, he instead felt a tremendous power transmit his way along with the sword blade. The Soaring Dragon Sword that could shave iron as if butter disintegrated into countless pieces that fired out in every direction, while Little An was also sent out bombing, crashing into a column.

The small sword merely suffered a slight dimming of its sword light. After a slight pause it once again stabbed toward Li Qingshan, vowing not to rest before taking his life.

Li Qingshan had already retreated to the corner of the hall. He took advantage of the additional timing Little An had earned for him and opened the [Cursive Sword Script] after pulling it out. He poured his true qi inside without regard for anything else.

A “brush stroke” lit up at this moment when life and death hung by a thread. It fired out a swift sword light that clashed together with the small sword resplendent with golden light.

No sound that could be called gigantic came, there was only a ring of spiritual light spreading out inside the hall, like a small sun suddenly risen.

But Li Qingshan felt as if the hum of thunder was ringing against his ears. A trace of fresh blood flowed out from his ears.

The rays of light vanished very fast. The portraits of the Dragon Gate Sect suzerains turned into dust one after another and scattered in the air, likewise for the clothes on Li Qingshan's body. On closer examination, there were thousands and ten thousands of sword scars fine as oxen hairs left on the walls and the floor.

The small broken sword had released sword qi fragments shaped like sword tips, soundlessly piercing through everything in the great hall.

Even Li Qingshan stayed dumbstruck witnessing this level of power. The flying sword's might had left a deep impression in his mind.

Yang Anzhi had originally been keeping guard at the mouth of the secret passageway already. He immediately turned around and drilled inside the secret passage after seeing the assassination's failure. Then he triggered the mechanism and lowered a huge rock of several hundred thousand pounds, sealing the mouth of the secret passage. There was no need to even think about chasing behind him.

Li Qingshan had been forced into a corner of the hall while Little An had crashed into a column, so no one could attend to him during this short time. It looked like he was about to make his escape.

Chapter 68: Sudden Back And Forth

Yang Anzhi fell on the ground as if struck by lightning as soon as he took a step forward. He trembled from head to toes, fresh blood pouring out from each of his pores. In not long of a time, he had turned into a bloody bottle gourd.

Those sword-tip shaped sword qi didn't distinguish between friends and foes. The only reason Li Qingshan had avoided suffering harm was because of his true qi protecting his body, but what Yang Anzhi had cultivated was merely internal strength. There was a substantial difference with true qi, and it hadn't been enough to block the sword rays.

The whole of the Ancestor Hall began to produce creaking and groaning sounds. Much dust and sawdust fluttered down. It's entire structure had been broken by the sword rays and it looked soon to collapse.

Li Qingshan didn't dare to be careless facing a building of several hundred thousand pounds about to press down. "Little An hurry to leave!" But his own person directly charged toward Yang Anzhi.

The sound of the Ancestor Hall's sudden collapse spread out more than ten miles outward. The smoke and dust diffused toward the whole of Dragon Gate mountain, immediately alarming the Dragon Gate Sect disciples guarding the mountain. They hurried up one after another.

Li Qingshan's figure emerged from within the drifting smoke of

dust in front of the main hall, a human heart within his hand.

Little An lowered his head, feeling ashamed and guilty. If it hadn't been for him showing off and clashing swords with Yang Anzhi right then, the latter would certainly have had no opportunity to escape from the Ancestor Hall, and Li Qingshan wouldn't have needed to brave such great dangers either.

Li Qingshan rubbed Little An's head. "No matter!" Just like a father facing the child he doted upon, an elder brother facing his dearly beloved younger brother.

Two sharply opposite traits of cruelty and gentleness appeared on him at the same time. It was extremely contradictory yet rational at the same time.

He'd taken the heart from more than a dozen masters of the Dragon Gate Sect with his "Tiger Demon Heart Scoop" hand technique. The flame in Little An's eye sockets were much brighter after he absorbed from them. Whether power or speed, they'd both been increased by quite a bit. The rapid pace of progress was indeed worthy of the name of a supernatural skill.

Li Qingshan took that spiritual treasured sword from the crossbeam inside the hall. It was somewhat inferior to the Soaring Dragon Sword, but it was much smaller and shorter, hence it was more suitable for Little An to use and display the might of his sword arts with.

Li Qingshan once again made a search around the Dragon Gate

Sect. He found clothes to wear, but he didn't find the kind of treasure chamber like inside the Black Wind Camp. After all the Dragon Gate Sect wouldn't have purchased so much silver and tools without good cause. Moreover, the Black Wind Camp was a den of bandits and it wasn't convenient for them to pawn off their goods, so they had to deposit them inside a treasure-house.

But he found a dozen bottles of medicine with "Nine Ginseng Autumn Dew Pellet," "Deer Litter Bone Replacing Pellet" and other such names marked on them. Although they weren't spiritual pills and wonder herbs from immortals, the Dragon Gate Sect had still paid much money and much efforts in order to refine them and nurture its disciples. Their effectiveness couldn't match the spirit ginseng's spiritual wine, but it was still much above wine soaked from ordinary ginseng. It could also count as an abundant gain.

But the greatest gain was on the body of that Dragon Gate young master Yang Jun: a stack of silver banknotes, enough for several dozen thousand taels. Yang Anzhi had already made preparations for retreat and taken out all their savings. He'd let this beloved only son of his take care of them as insurance in case anything happened. But he hadn't expected Li Qingshan to come so suddenly, and so fiercely.

The Dragon Gate Sect disciples guarding the mountain arrived one by one. They looked at each other, dumbstruck when they took in the sight of the collapsed Ancestor Hall: "What.. What happened?"

They charged into the great hall and were immediately stunned by the tragic scene in front of their eyes. Bodies lay at sixes and

sevens, each of them with a hole in their chests. There was only a single figure standing inside with its back to them.

A disciple strengthened his guts and shouted, “Who are you!”

Li Qingshan patted the porcelain jar and pacified the somewhat restless Little An inside. He turned around and said: “I am Li Qingshan. The Dragon Gate Sect is already destroyed, all of you just scatter away!” He then walked out of the hall in great strides when he was done talking.

The Black Wind Camp’s bandits were all replete with evil, they absolutely needed to be killed to the last. Meanwhile, the men of the Dragon Gate Sect inside this hall had already forged a mortal enmity with him and meant to take away his life, hence they also couldn’t be let off. But those ordinary Dragon Gate Sect disciples had been used like cast-offs. Even if he wanted to help Little An recover a body as soon as possible, he still certainly had no wish to kill indiscriminately.

Of course, he would certainly not show mercy either if those disciples dared to pull their swords and try to kill him. Those who lived by the sword died by the sword, and those who killed also certainly understood they could be killed in turn.

Li Qingshan went past several dozen Dragon Gate disciples. They all happened to step away from his path.

Someone pulled his sword with a “shua” when Li Qingshan was soon about to reach the front of the hall’s gates, and roared “I’ll

kill you!” as he charged toward Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan turned his eyes back and threw him a mild glance. That disciple’s stature froze at once. This glance full of murderous spirit seemed like a sharp sword, piercing straight inside his heart. The sword in his hand fell down with a clang and he knelt on the floor, saying: “You’re not human, monster, demon!”

Li Qingshan naturally wouldn’t take it to heart. He walked outside the hall easy and confident. He deeply breathed in a mouthful of cold air. Another grudge debt settled.

A group of Dragon Gate disciples followed behind Li Qingshan, trembling in fear on the lonely peak. Li Qingshan reached the edge of a precipice and threw himself down with a leap, vanishing inside the darkness of the windy snow.

As the saying went, “going uphill was easy, going downhill was difficult.” The road down the mountains Li Qingshan walked on was more treacherous than climbing the peak back time he’d come. He used the “Tiger Demon Mountain Descent” and controlled his posture with all his strength. He had to be cautious in his use of every parcel of power. A little more or a little less would both end up with a broken body and fractured bones.

But he managed to descend the mountain safe and sound thanks to his previous experience. He was increasingly proficient with the use of this [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist]. A burst of great gurgling shouts came from his stomach just when he was feeling full of spirit, and he felt the attack of an intense pang of hunger. Last night he’d ran far to raid the Black Wind Camp and fought a

great war for such a long time, yet he still hadn't been so fiercely hungry like right now.

He dashed madly all the way back and returned to Suncheer City. The gates were already closed. He leaped and climbed, and with a flip and tumble he went back to the restaurant.

The restaurant was filled with brilliant lights upstairs, the banquet yet to disperse. Everyone sipped their wine without tasting the savor, chatted a few words without any interest. They were merely waiting for Li Qingshan's news.

Li Qingshan suddenly appeared in front of the crowd. Everyone was in doubt as to whether he actually went to the Dragon Gate Sect, because he'd only used two hours going there and back. It wasn't enough for ordinary people to even ascend the Dragon Gate mountain.

However, even though Li Qingshan had used the snow to wash off the bloodstains on his body, that reek of blood was still so thick it hadn't melted away.

Ye Dachuan said, "Qingshan!"

Li Qingshan said, "My lord please sit at ease. The Dragon Gate Sect is destroyed. Yang Anzhi, Yang Jun, as well as the group of brigands have all been cleanly eliminated. I let the other disciples go away and scatter on their own."

The people filling the building sucked in a cold breath at the same time. If they hadn't been intimidated by Li Qingshan's awe-inspiring might, they would almost be doubting whether he was telling the truth or a lie. What kind of speed was this. He'd spend a day and a night going there and back when he'd gone to destroy the Black Wind Camp.

Ye Dachuan said, "So fast!"

Li Qingshan nodded. Although it had been only a day, he'd already become stronger. First of all, Little An had become a powerful aid after cultivating the [Dao of the Beautiful Bones], and secondly he'd begun to practice the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] and transformed his body's power into lethal force.

Out of those present, there was only the Iron Fist Gate master Liu Hong alone who was entirely aware of these kind of changes. He deeply lowered his head. He could only conceal the shock on his own face this way. He presently felt that Li Qingshan was just like a divine sharp weapon with an edge ground out of it, releasing an unprecedentedly dazzling cutting edge.

Chapter 69: First Grade Master

Originally Liu Hong wasn't very convinced inside his heart after losing to Li Qingshan. He knew weapon techniques as well, and he felt Li Qingshan had bullied him because he wasn't using any weapon. He'd only been genuinely convinced in his heart and on his mouth when Li Qingshan had single-handedly destroyed the Black Wind Camp, but he'd still perceived him as a figure endowed with surprising talent standing a little higher than himself. After all, Li Qingshan had still another master helping him.

But he had a kind of feeling that Li Qingshan could take his life within the space of one move as long as he wished to at present. Don't mention fighting back, he wouldn't even have the opportunity to run away. This was the intuition of an old hand of the martial world, an intuition that had helped him avoid many disasters. It would definitely not be wrong.

Could he be a first grade master already?! This was impossible, it had only been one day. But the reality in front of his eyes wouldn't let him refute it. He was deeply doubtful whether it had been the right thing to do when he'd reported the matter of the spirit ginseng back to the Iron Fist Gate headquarters in the Clear River capital. The master of the headquarters would surely send men over. There was no one who wasn't aware of the spirit ginseng's value.

But the Clear River capital would have obtained the news very fast thanks to Yang Anzhi's deliberate actions anyway even if he hadn't done so. This place was very quickly going to become a place where men of the martial world swarmed to.

Dragon Li also took part in the celebration feast. He watched the reverent appearance of the crowd of nobles toward the high spirit of the young man who'd walked out of Crouching Bull Village together with him. He couldn't tell whether it was admiration or envy that was in his heart, and his mood was likewise in a complete mess.

But he'd keenly noticed the changes in Liu Hong's expression, and asked, "Master, are you still alright!"

Li Qingshan also heard those words and offered a toast: "Old Hero Liu, I left too hurriedly earlier and disturbed the mood for wine. This cup will be my apology."

Liu Hong hurriedly stood up and said: "Cough, Qingshan, you shame me if you call me this way. What hero, only the old part is true. Those rivers and lakes belong to young people like you. Little Dragon, quickly stand up. You're people of the same village, you should drink a few more cups together. I have to trouble Qingshan to take care of this unworthy disciple in the future."

Everyone exposed some curiosity. The Iron Fist Gate had influence over the whole of the Clear River prefecture. They were truly a great family with great industries, why would they need an outsider to take care of their own disciples.

Li Qingshan also froze a moment, then he smiled: "With pleasure!" He drained the cup of wine in one gulp. It was clearly but an extremely ordinary thing, but it attracted a burst of

boisterous cheers from the crowd nonetheless.

Li Qingshan had barely coped with them that his belly once again cried out “Gu Gu.” Quite a few people exposed a smile, but then quickly took their smile back.

Ye Dachuan said: “Quickly make some things to eat, go, tell the kitchen to bring some more wines and dishes.” He liked Li Qingshan more the more he looked at him. As long as this “constable Li” was here, he could easily oppress both righteous sects and criminals of Suncheer City, and he could be truly worthy of this title of county magistrate. Moreover, apart from being bold and powerful, he still understood etiquette and knew appropriate behavior. He wasn’t the kind of frivolous young person who disregarded everyone else but themselves. Sometimes he had a mature experience that belied his young age.

Li Qingshan didn’t know what Ye Dachuan was thinking. His eyes were presently only filled with the table full of wines and dishes, and he was indeed disregarding everyone else. At first he maintained basic table manners, but he couldn’t care about much else after a few mouthfuls of rice and dishes went down his belly, and he simply spread his mouth wide open, eating and drinking free and unrestrained, truly swallowing like a wolf and devouring like a tiger.

A plate of dish was emptied with a wave of the chopsticks. That was still due to his ingenuous control of his movements, ordinary people couldn’t even do that. At the same time he was eating very meticulously. Any dish that went inside his mouth was crushed to pieces with one bite and one grind, it was even more efficient than

others' slow chewing and meticulous swallowing.

He bit down a small half off a roasted chicken in one mouthful. He didn't even spit out the bones and likewise ground them to pieces before swallowing them down his belly. In not much effort the roasted chicken had been cleanly eaten with nothing left.

Everyone watched dumbstruck with open mouth and round eyes. When had they ever seen in all of their lives someone eat like this.

In not long of a time, Li Qingshan had swallowed half the dishes and wines on the table, but he still didn't have the slightest sensation of fullness. His stomach was like a great furnace that couldn't be fully filled as it digested and absorbed the food at extreme speed, transforming it into energy, and transporting it to every part of his body.

Cheers even gradually echoed upstairs the restaurant. "Young hero Li is indeed heroic!" "What young hero, it's constable. With a hero like constable Li protecting us, what mountain bandits and brigands will we still need to fear."

One man ate while a group of men cheered around. Even Li Qingshan himself felt that a little weird. He knew the appearance of his eating could definitely not be said to be graceful. For this group of nobles who lived like princes and paid much attention to outward manners, he could definitely be stuck with "Country Bumpkin" and "Hungry Ghost" tags.

But those exaggerated praises were actually sincere for the most

part. An ordinary man eating like this would have been drowned in contemptuous gazes long ago. He wasn't an ordinary man however, but a mighty man who'd leveled two great influences of Suncheer City, so everyone's evaluation of this thing immediately made a one-eighty, and it'd immediately become heroic and domineering.

Li Qingshan ate and drank free and unrestrained while the wine and dishes were sent up as if they flowed like water. He only gave up after eating three tables worth of wine and dishes.

Time was late and everyone dispersed. There was naturally someone who arranged living quarters for him, a courtyard inside Suncheer City whose area wasn't small.

He had no idea how many cups of wine he'd drunk. There was some intoxication even with his body's capacity for alcohol. He fell on the bed as soon as he came into the room and muttered, "Little An." Then he immediately fell deeply asleep, feeling very much at ease in his mind. Without Little An there, he would absolutely not dare to become drunk and then fall asleep so carelessly, he'd have to stay vigilantly on his guards at all time instead.

That was the frightfulness of falling target to the public eye. No matter how high your martial arts, your focus and energy would still tire and weaken if things went on this way, and you would have even less the inclination to practice supernatural skills and martial studies.

Little An carefully helped him take off his clothes and shoes, positioned him on the bed and carefully covered him with a quilt,

just like he were completing a sacred ritual. Then like a bodyguard, he put his hand on his treasured sword and stood guard at the head of the bed.

No one could know if it was because Li Qingshan had shocked too many people last night, or if those gazes in the darkness wanted to continue their observation, but Li Qingshan passed the night in peace without suffering disturbance from anyone lacking discretion.

He slept all the way until the sky shone with bright light. The continuous fighting and slaughter brought the exhaustion of spirit and mind with it. Only now did he truly find relief as he stayed blankly on the bed for a while, thinking back to last night's dream. It hadn't been a dream that went back to his former life anymore, but a new dream. What was it concretely however? He couldn't remember one bit.

Little An carried a basin full of water in front of him while he lay blankly on the bed. Li Qingshan uttered a thanks and lowered his head, watching the basin: "Eh, why does it look like I've become thinner!" He touched his face. It seemed indeed like it had thinned a bit. He'd continuously eaten meat every day in the mountains, and his physique had clearly become stronger and more muscular after cultivating to the strength of one bull. His face had also become fleshier, not as thin as in the past. The spirited appearance of his whole person had seemed to be extremely well-fed and healthy like a bull.

Was it because he'd worked too hard those past two days? He muttered to himself inside his mind and stuck his head in the

water all at once, then pulled it back out, his whole person already completely awake: “Let’s go, time to train!”

The courtyard’s location was somewhat remote and it was very quiet, while the area was also vast. It was suitable to train martial arts and it suited Li Qingshan’s tastes. But when he went outside, he found out the great snow had already stopped who knew when. The light of the winter sun fell on the snowy ground, bright enough to bedazzle the eyes.

Li Qingshan stepped on the snow and came under the sunlight. He stretched his waist. When he turned his head back he saw Little An still standing inside the shadows, not daring to come out of the doors.

Li Qingshan smiled faintly and stretched his hand out: “Come!”

Chapter 70: A Radiant World

Little An looked at Li Qingshan. His entire person seemed to have been gilded with a halo of light amidst the sunlight and snow, his faint smile so brilliant it made people not dare to look at it directly. It simply had the flavor of glory and splendor, and that hand was just like an invitation from a radiant world.

The pain from the burn of sunlight was still engraved into his heart, but he was unable to repress the stretching out of his hand even so. That white bony hand without flesh or blood was like moth to the flame. He couldn't refuse the invitation from that hand even if he were to be entirely burned by the sunlight.

His index was the first to cross the boundary between the worlds of light and darkness. The sunlight didn't ignite him. It gave him an extremely warm feeling instead, sparkling from the depths of his soul. He was unable to wait and put his hand inside Li Qingshan's palm.

Li Qingshan clenched that pale-white bony hand. That bone hand could possibly be somewhat terrifying for ordinary people.

Little An crossed through the door and out of the room, passing through the boundary between the worlds of darkness and light, immersing himself under the sunlight.

Li Qingshan laughed out loud and lifted Little An: "How do you feel?"

Little An nodded happily, showing he felt really good, he'd never felt so good.

The sunlight was not only harmful to shady ghosts, it also had a restraining effect on every evil spirit in the world. The green bull hadn't duped Li Qingshan. Little An was able not to fear sunlight in the slightest, not because he was strong enough, but because he inherently didn't belong to the same category as evil spirits and demons, even to the point of carrying the holy and solemn atmosphere of a Buddhist. This was precisely the might of a demonic supernatural skill created by a senior Buddhist monk like the [Dao of the Beautiful Bones]. It was hard to classify between the lands of the living or the dead, and it originated from Buddha and demons at the same time.

Li Qingshan couldn't think of a way to celebrate such a great happy day for Little An. Little An couldn't eat and couldn't drink either, don't tell him he had to go out and scoop back two hearts?

Hence he waved his hand. "I'll stack up a snowman for you!"

Little An was indeed as happy as an ordinary child.

Li Qingshan said: "I haven't told you right, my skill at building snowmen is even above my supernatural skill."

Little An immediately manifested an admiring appearance. Li Qingshan laughed loudly, fully proud of himself. He crouched down and piled the thick snow mantle into a great ball, then rolled out another small ball and put it over the great ball. He gave it a

look, very satisfied with the perfect form of those two snowballs, and was about to go back to the room and find some things to build the eyes and nose with.

Suddenly a white figure stood in front of him. He observed it carefully and found out this white figure was unexpectedly himself, a Li Qingshan carved from snow. Although the facial features were a little fuzzy, the form of that figure, that aura, it was simply true to life. Little An was in the middle of patiently carving the outlines of the clothes.

Li Qingshan said, “You... you did this?” This was already not a snowman anymore, but more like a snow sculpture!

Little An nodded, throwing a greatly curious glance behind Li Qingshan.

“Hah!” Li Qingshan spit out his voice and turned back, flying up with a kick and breaking to pieces those two snowballs that could have been called perfect. It made Little An jump in fright. “Haha, that was just practice, now I’m serious.”

When Little An finished the big Li Qingshan, the medium Li Qingshan, and the small Li Qingshan, as well as snow sculptures of every kind of birds and beasts.

“Hah!” “Hah!” “Hah!” Li Qingshan also destroyed his great “masterpieces” one by one, dropping exhausted on the snowy ground. “Fine, my snowman-making skill is still this little bit inferior to my supernatural skill.”

But seeing Little An looking so extremely happy as he played, it could probably also count as achieving his goal!

“Someone came over!” Li Qingshan’s mind flashed as he heard the sound of footsteps. Little An immediately hid back inside the room. “Dong dong dong.” Several knocks sounded on the door. Li Qingshan opened the door. It was the adviser.

The adviser was full of smiles: “Constable Li, how did you sleep last night. My lord invites you to go by the government offices, [we open court today](#).”

Court opening, where the magistrate receives the population and hears their cases.

Li Qingshan told Little An to hide carefully, and came to the government offices after slight tidying. Ye Dachuan invited him personally to the rear hall, then ordered someone to bring a set of clothes. It was the constable’s apparels, together with a [standardized wind sewing blade](#).

Probably a kind of saber/dao out of many from the Qing dynasty.

He could naturally not decline someone else’s good intentions. Moreover this status of constable also had some use for Li Qingshan. The feudal authorities in this world didn’t seem very powerful, but they certainly had their own peculiarities since they could occupy the status of orthodox power under the heavens. He still needed this status for the moment.

Li Qingshan changed his clothes in the side room, and also fitted

the wind sewing blade. His temperament seemed to have changed once again when he came back out. The black color of the constable clothes had a style that wasn't as ugly as Li Qingshan had first imagined. It very much had the style of an uniform instead, and when worn on his body, he looked a little less like the free and bold men of the martial world and a little more like a dignified upright hero.

Ye Dachuan said: "I was originally saying whether it was a little too small, I didn't expect it to fit just right. Although it can't match up to proper dark wolves garments, you're even more awe-inspiring than those real Eagle Wolves guards when it's put on your body."

Li Qingshan thought that it indeed wasn't his own illusions, he really became thinner. That wasn't because of his excessive activities these days, it was probably a side effect from cultivating the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist].

"Dark wolf uniform? Eagle Wolf guards?"

Ye Dachuan said: "Hmph, a bunch of wolf cubs who walk with their noses in the air and don't even spit out bones when they eat someone. Don't worry, their influence can't reach all the way here. Inside this Suncheer City, it's just you and me who are number ones!"

Li Qingshan was originally only asking casually, but at this moment he cared about this issue. The meaning inside Ye Dachuan's words was that they wouldn't be the number ones instead if the Eagle Wolf guards' influence reached this place. Ye

Dachuan had already seen his own martial strength. It looked like the court and government in this world weren't actually as weak as in his imagination. The weak one was only this Ye Dachuan in front of him in all likelihood.

He'd been closed up inside a mountain village for more than a dozen years, and he'd fought east and west as soon as he'd come out. He had absolutely not spared any time to carefully gain an understanding of this world. It was likewise even now, he wanted to cultivate the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] as fast as possible to answer the changes and dangers that would possibly appear next.

“Lord Ye, Constable Li, we ought to open court.”

Li Qingshan stood there and showed off his positions a bit, then took his leave and returned to his yard. He discovered the door slightly open ajar. His heart jumped and he rushed inside, but he found Sick Yellow Tiger standing in the courtyard, in the middle of examining those snow sculptures: “Qingshan is really refined!”

Li Qingshan smiled bitterly, unable to refute. “Chief hunter came really fast, could those be?” There were eight great wine jars in the yard together with two bamboo baskets, looking very eye-catching.

“Of course it's the tiger bone wine you wanted!” Sick Yellow Tiger opened a wine jar, and a thick medicinal wine fragrance pervaded the entire courtyard.

“So much!”

“I’ve dug out all our properties.” Sick Yellow Tiger smiled and looked at Li Qingshan: “This dressing style is really dashing. You won’t need to fear other plotting to seize your things if you can really join the Eagle Wolf Guard.”

The Eagle Wolf Guard again? Li Qingshan said, “Chief hunter, how fierce is the Eagle Wolf Guard really?” Sick Yellow Tiger had once gone out of Suncheer City to great places like the Clear River capital, so Li Qingshan naturally had to ask him for a little guidance.

Sick Yellow Tiger’s expression also became solemn: “More than fierce. One of their duties is to arrest those people of the martial world ordinary bailiffs can’t control. There’s no one who isn’t afraid of them in the martial world, they all call them the hunting dogs of the imperial court. But the Eagle Wolf Guard only recruits innate masters, they won’t act for no reason. I’ve walked through the martial world for half my life and I’ve only seen them a few times from afar.”

Chapter 71: Wine And Training

Li Qingshan thought it over. Perhaps it was the court's genuine power. But only this made any sense. Where was there any basis for the weak to rule the strong in this world. Anyone would try to pursue greater privileges after obtaining great strength, then how would ordinary people govern men of the martial world who possessed powerful martial abilities.

This Eagle Wolf Guard was sure to be an important strength of the imperial court. As they said, it was easier to cultivate inside the governmental special police. He could get rid of quite a few troubles if he could join. "It's not impossible there'll be an opportunity!"

"I have faith you can do it!" Sick Yellow Tiger still thought Li Qingshan was pondering the matter of joining the Eagle Wolf Guard. He'd already learned the matter of last night about Li Qingshan destroying the Dragon Gate in two hours. But he wasn't like the others. Apart from his surprise when he heard the news, there was also a feeling of "I thought as much."

Li Qingshan had grown at a rapid pace that was difficult to imagine ever since he'd met him. He couldn't help but remember the words Li Qingshan had said back then, "I will certainly become an innate master!" Originally he'd listened to those words like the words of a child, but now he believed. As long as Li Qingshan didn't die mid-way, he would definitely become this kind of master.

Li Qingshan decided not to think about such distant things for

now: “Apart from the tiger bone wine, could those bamboo baskets be?”

“Correct! It’s ginseng!” Sick Yellow Tiger opened the bamboo baskets. They were unexpectedly filled to the brim with ginseng.

Li Qingshan had spent the huge fortune of a thousand taels of silver back then, and the ginseng he’d brought was probably not even enough to fill one tenth of those bamboo baskets. Tiger bones were still easy to handle, but Horse Rein Village wasn’t a village famous for gathering ginseng. He acutely smelled the scent of blood on them. It was very faint, but very fresh. He would simply have wondered whether it was his own mistaken illusion if not for this this scent of blood being so distinct. Could it be that his nose also became spiritual after cultivating the supernatural skill?

Sick Yellow Tiger said: “We just got rid of troubles for the Horse Rein Village, those ginsengs were an unexpected gain.” After he had taken the spiritual wine, he’d not only recovered, but his martial arts had also made progresses once again. Because of the bloody excitement from Li Qingshan destroying the Black Wind Camp, he’d immediately led men to attack the Ginseng King Village after he’d gone back to the Horse Rein Village.

The Ginseng King Village’s strength wasn’t as high as Horse Rein Village’s to begin with. Then Yang Jun had messed up everything inside the Ginseng King Village as he led a group of masters in search for the spirit ginseng, and they had precisely been at their weakest. Sick Yellow Tiger succeeded in one battle and greatly ruined the Ginseng King Village.

Li Qingshan stayed silent a moment. Although the Ginseng King had once had grudges with him, they were still a village when all was said and done, not a den of bandits like the Black Wind Camp. But he was also clearly aware that the Ginseng King Village would have done the same if they'd had the strength.

It was almost impossible to dissolve a hatred of life and death once it was forged. There was only defeating the opponent with all of your strength. If you wished to protect your relatives and friends, then you had to go kill someone else's relatives and friends. There was only different standpoints, there was no good and evil. There was no road of retreat once one entered the martial world. No shortage of wine cups to drink, no shortage of enemies to behead.

"I just happen to need these things, many thanks to the chief hunter. The value of those ginsengs is considerable, I also can't take them free of charge. Chief hunter, name your price!"

Sick Yellow Tiger wasn't too courteous either: "I just knew you kid didn't take a trip to the Black Wind Camp in vain this time. As to the silver, you see how much you want to give!"

Li Qingshan gave all of the silver he obtained from the Black Wind Camp to Sick Yellow Tiger, more than ten thousand taels. The value of those ginsengs was quite a bit higher than this sum, but since it was a bulk purchase, there certainly would be a bulk discount as well. This act of Li Qingshan's didn't take advantage of anyone, and didn't suffer any loss either.

Sick Yellow Tiger also felt happy. He was sure to raise Horse Rein

Village's strength to another level as long as he had this silver, together with the medicinal formulas Li Qingshan had given him. "You have to be very very careful during this time and guard against hidden plots in your back. Give us a sign if there's need, but I have a feeling you're not going to lose."

Li Qingshan said, "Many thanks for the chief hunter's auspicious words!"

Li Qingshan pondered a long while after Sick Yellow Tiger left. He suddenly saw Little An stick his head out from the door, watching him with a "burning" gaze. He couldn't help smiling. He had to protect this child, this was an unquestionable determination.

There wasn't necessarily no confusion and suffering for him, with an abrupt change in his living environment, in the midst of continuous bloody killing. The him of the previous world would certainly have sunken into depression, but now he wanted to straighten his spine, not exposing a single shred of weakness, because this child was watching him. If one said that the supernatural power and his strength had given him self-confidence, then protection and responsibility had strengthened his heart, transforming him into a real man.

Those medicinal wines and ginsengs had been sent at the right time. There was no need to talk about the tiger bone wine, it was extremely helpful for the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist]. The ginseng was even more of a necessity. The spirit ginseng now needed several days before it could soak one gourd worth of spiritual wine, and the wine's taste was also not as thick as it had

been at the very start.

Li Qingshan discarded his thoughts and formally started to cultivate the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist].

There were also nine layers in total to the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist]. Li Qingshan's present goal was still to cultivate to the first layer. According to the green bull's words, as long as he cultivated to the first layer, it could link with the [Bull Demon Strong Fist], tiger and bull assisting each other and displaying this supernatural skill's genuine strength.

Li Qingshan first hugged up a jar of tiger bone wine and drank down several mouthfuls, then he moved and tossed inside the yard, practicing the fist moves one by one. The steps under his feet became increasingly faster, and within the space of a short time there was only a blur left inside the yard, blowing bursts and bursts of wild wind with it.

He quickly absorbed the medicinal wine. He stopped and went to drink it again. Such cycles went on until noon when he unexpectedly felt hunger hard to tolerate once gain. There was even a kind of faint feeling that he'd overtaxed his spirit and that his primordial energy would soon be injured.

But the results were also very obvious. He was already able to clearly sense his own movements speeding up somewhat yet again in just the space of a morning. His explosiveness was more powerful than ever before, and the bones in his entire body had also become tougher, able to bear more violent motions and actions from him. There wouldn't be any more of that feeling they

would be soon about to break, like back when he'd climbed the Dragon Gate mountain the previous night.

Li Qingshan felt very uplifted. He came to a nearby restaurant. The owner hurriedly came out to greet him when he saw him walk inside. "Constable Li, how did your honored self come. You honor us with your presence, please quickly come inside."

Li Qingshan didn't fake too much courtesy either and ordered a table full of wine and dishes. He ate and chewed free and unrestrained, as if there was nobody else present, but he was already keenly aware that there were several additional men of the martial world carrying sabers or swords inside the restaurant. Those persons were likewise carefully examining him, but since the opposite parties didn't act, Li Qingshan was also too lazy to stir additional trouble. After the meal he went to settle the bill.

"Shop owner, in the future send meals to my place according to the same amount, no need stick to the same dishes, three meals everyday, no, four meals, better if there's more meat with bones." He had presently no energy to go hunting, and he'd also long been fed up with the same taste of grilled meat anyway. Now he had money so he naturally had to eat fine dishes and drink fine wines. The restaurant chef's craft was far above that of an amateur like him.

The owner was just being distressed at all the money he was losing today. He almost fell down when he heard Li Qingshan's words. "Constable Li, this shop is small and doesn't make much money!"

“Hm?”

The owner felt his heartbeat almost stop with a “hm?” of no consequences from Li Qingshan. He silently cursed himself for being blinded by profit. Why did he provoke this evil star for the sake of food money, did he really find life too long?

“Will I eat from you for free? This is advance payment.” Li Qingshan fished out a thousand taels silver note and put it on the counter.

Chapter 72: Black Tiger Cave Exit

“Yesyesyes, Constable Li is great hero and a great good man, he’ll naturally not try to get this small benefit at this small shop’s expense. It’s this petty self who’s lowered others to his standards with his narrow mind.” The owner was delighted and immediately took the silver as he spoke extremely deferentially.

Li Qingshan turned around and went out. Those men of the martial world discussed among themselves in low voices.

“So that was Tiger Descending the Mountains Li Qingshan? It turns out he’s only a little kid.”

“What kid, he’s someone who exterminated the Black Wind Camp and the Dragon Gate Sect, and I also heard he was expert with the “Black Tiger Heart Scoop”...”

“What’s surprising about the Black Tiger Heart Scoop? I can use it too, who can’t use it in the martial world.” This was the most standard of techniques for men of the martial world.

“Shut up, don’t interrupt me. Everyone he’s killed has had their heart scooped out, can you do that?”

Everyone at the table sucked in a cold breath. “What savage methods!”

“That’s why we have to be careful this time, and be careful some

more.”

Several days went past, and there were more and more men of the martial world inside Suncheer City. The surprise attacks Li Qingshan was on guard against unexpectedly hadn't happened yet. Everyone was still quietly observing. The savage fame of scooping hearts after murder indeed exerted an extremely great effect. Moreover, the more people of the martial world there were, the more cautious they were. They feared becoming the mantis stalking the cicadas, unaware of the oriole behind.

Li Qingshan was happy no one came to disturb him so he could train with single-hearted focus. He could become a little stronger again with each day you gave him. But his figure was slimming down very fast. It was almost back to his original appearance.

It was different with that kind of weak thinness from back then however. The present him was just like a piece of steel being unceasingly hammered, its volume increasingly smaller but also increasingly tighter and harder. He was just like a javelin standing there, carrying with him an intimidating edge.

Li Qingshan hadn't expected either at the beginning that the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] could actually reach such a level in body tempering. But such tempering also brought extremely great burdens to the body.

At present, outside of eating his meals, he also ate ginseng. Correct, not drinking medicinal wine soaked with ginseng, but directly eating them. Each time he trained himself to exhaustion, he would eat ginsengs several decades old as if they were snacks.

Dried ginseng was hard as wood, but his teeth were even sharper than steel knives. He would grind them to pieces with a few chews and swallow them in his belly, not worried at all about nosebleeds. The yuan essence transformed from the ginseng in his belly didn't even have to run a lap inside his body before being cleanly absorbed by a physique eager and thirsty for energy. It was also thanks to those ginsengs that he hadn't become even thinner.

The great snow sometimes stopped and sometimes fell. Another half-month went by.

Li Qingshan was sitting in meditation when a flurry of wind attacked the back of his head. He didn't even turn his head back. His body suddenly bounced up and collided backward, just like a great human-shaped spring.

His head hammered the one who'd sneaked up on him and sent him flying out from the collision, pasting him on the stone wall.

The eleventh. This was already the eleventh person to sneak up on him during these days. Although most chose to observe from afar, those who wanted to try their luck weren't few either. It was unfortunate said luck wasn't that good.

Li Qingshan stood up. He sensed seven or eight peeping gazes in the surrounding and shouted in a low voice: "You can all get lost!" The shock from his voice containing true qi caused the tiles to tremble. Those whose skills were a bit lacking out of those observers immediately felt something heavily boring into their

head. They vanished without delay.

Li Qingshan took the heart after killing someone as usual, then threw the corpse outside the walls. He felt that the true qi inside his body that had initially been like a gossamer thread had already become very abundant and powerful at present, flowing wantonly inside his body like a river.

He'd drunken the eight great jars of tiger bone wine clean, and the two baskets of ginseng had already been chewed until not a single one was left, as well as the several bottles of medicinal pellets he'd captured from the Dragon Gate Sect.

He'd cultivated the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] to some small success, but there was still some gap with the first layer. He didn't know whether it was his accumulation that wasn't enough or if the opportunity hadn't come yet.

He stood up and found out his fingernails had once again grown longer. The sound produced by the friction as they crisscrossed together was like the ring of metal. He lightly clawed on the stone table beside him, clawing four deep scars on the table as if it were made out of butter. It was easy to imagine the kind of savage martial move produced when he used the "Tiger Demon Heart Scoop" with this kind of hands.

He had confidence he could entirely kill off those observers, but he hadn't done so. He didn't want to employ a killing hand as long as they didn't directly act against him. But this kind of patience was fading away bit by bit. The deeper he gradually followed through the cultivation of the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist],

the stronger the vicious nature and evil tendencies in his heart became.

He was like just like a fierce tiger twitching inside its cage, itching to brandish its teeth and claws. He'd also become aware of those changes.

“If a master of the rivers and lakes were to be spied on so unscrupulously, he'd probably have started a great massacre already. Is it that I'm a little too good to bully?” This kind of thoughts continuously turned inside his mind, and the voice was already becoming louder and louder. But he still tried his best to restrain himself.

Little An held Li Qingshan's wrist with some worry. Out of the eleven persons Li Qingshan had killed these days, apart from the first two, no one out of the nine after that wasn't a second-grade master. Their blood energy was much stronger compared to ordinary people, and Little An's strength was growing as if it had no limit and suffered no bottleneck.

Li Qingshan said: “Let's go, let's go out and relieve some boredom!” He put on the dark wolf garments, and fitted the wind stitching blade, then walked outside, walked toward the largest restaurant in Suncheer City. People of the martial world would all be gathered there for the most part. He had to talk clearly about this matter today.

News spread out throughout the entire city as soon as he walked out of the yard gates. “The Black Tiger came out of its cave!”

Inside the Iron Fist Gate, the Iron Lion Liu Hong was in the middle of saying respectfully to a middle-aged man over thirty years old with a white face and a miniature beard: “Hall master Wu, things are just like so. Li Qingshan isn’t to be trifled with, it won’t be easy to snatch the spirit ginseng. Moreover masters have gathered like clouds inside this Suncheer City, there are already first-grade masters who’ve shown themselves. They all want to use the spirit ginseng to break toward the innate realm. It wouldn’t be easy to swallow the spirit ginseng even if we seized it.”

Hall master Wu chided him: “Liu Hong, you’ve been enjoying retirement for too long in Suncheer, your courage is becoming increasingly smaller. When has my Iron Fist Gate ever been afraid of any master. If Li Qingshan truly has good natural talents, let him proffer the spirit ginseng out and we’ll have him join the Iron Fist Gate, it won’t be a loss for him.”

Dragon Li waited on the side and heard him address his own master directly by name in a very rude manner. He was very indignant in his heart: with this conduct of yours, you might not be able to beat Qingshan. Wait until he scoops your heart out, you’ll know what’s fierceness then.

How would Liu Hong not understand his own disciple. He feared he would say some improper words, so he grabbed his shoulder and said to hall master Wu, “Hall master Wu, this disciple of mine has decent aptitudes, it’s a pity to have him stay inside this Suncheer City. Would it be possible for your honored self to take him with you this time, let him follow you and experience the world.”

Hall master Wu looked at Dragon Li: “About this, division leader Liu you’ve gained merit this time providing news, so there’s nothing impossible about taking a person or two away.” Anyway searching for talent was also one of the great goals when the Iron Fist Gate had established a division in this kind of desolate area. This kind of doing someone a favor at little cost was also worth it.

Liu Hong was delighted: “Many thanks hall master Wu. Little Dragon, what are you doing staring blankly there, hurry to thank hall master Wu for his grace.”

Dragon Li couldn’t fail to live up to his master’s painstaking efforts. Although his heart wasn’t willing, he didn’t expose any of it on his expression as he honestly gave his thanks.

A light “pa” sounded.

Apart from the three men inside the room, there was another man admiring the paintings and calligraphy on the wall as if no one else were present. He didn’t communicate with anyone else. He was the one who’d caused that sound; it seemed he had very little patience left.

Chapter 73: Eagle Wolf Guard

The sky was presently dusky. That man's black clothes seemed to melt into the darkness as he stood in the corner. Liu Hong had paid much attention to him from the start, because he'd discovered that when he wasn't looking at him, he actually couldn't sense his existence in the slightest.

Hall master Wu said: "Division master Liu, let me introduce you to a great man." He arrogantly addressed Liu Hong by his own name when the latter was many years older than him, but his expression immediately became a little flattering when mentioning the black-clothed man, a little proud of himself, happy he could have built a relationship with this kind of grand character: "This sir is lord Feng of the Eagle Wolf Guard."

"Eagle Wolf Guard!" Liu Hong's heart jumped and he swallowed a mouthful of saliva. How could he not have heard of those famous hunting dogs of the imperial court. No wonder hall master Wu had such an attitude, even the Iron Fist Gate headquarters' master Tie Buyi would also have to carefully attend to him. No wonder hall master Wu had so much confidence. With the Eagle Wolf Guard stepping in, who would still dare to make him spit out something he ate down.

Lord Feng said faintly without even turning his head back, "I don't deserve so much praise from hall master Wu. Our Eagle leader only promised you once because he shared a few cups of wine with your Iron Gate master in Blessed Peace City. I still have things waiting for me in Blessed Peace, I can't tarry too long."

Blessed Peace was a great city hundred miles away from Suncheer. It not only had a great river flowing through that made it an extremely important waterway hub, it also had mines and quarries. It was far more flourishing than a small city like Suncheer. Hall master Wu's Iron Locks Hall was precisely established there, and its domain encompassed seven divisions, including Suncheer. There was also an Eagle Wolf Guard office there.

Hall master Wu said: "Right right right, we'll certainly not trouble lord Feng overly. Division master Liu, why aren't you still quickly telling that Li Qingshan to come."

Liu Hong didn't even dare use his sect disciples to run this errand. He went to find Li Qingshan himself after exhorting Dragon Li to carefully wait upon them.

Dragon Li had also vaguely heard Liu Hong mention the Eagle Wolf Guard before, but that world had been too far removed from him, so he hadn't paid much mind to it. He hadn't expected he would see one with his own eyes today, and he couldn't help but worry about Li Qingshan: Qingshan probably won't be able to hold onto the spirit ginseng this time. I still have to persuade him if he tries to be brave.

He hadn't had much dealings with Li Qingshan. This was only the plain and primitive affection of fellows from the same village. Moreover Li Qingshan's martial arts were much greater than his, and he would be able to look after him if he were to join the Iron Fist Gate. He suddenly remembered the words Liu Hong had said back then in the restaurant, about making Li Qingshan take many

cares of himself; it had probably in anticipation of this present day. He felt ever more emotions for Liu Hong's grace.

There was no one who could obtain news faster and more efficiently than Liu Hong inside the city. He found Li Qingshan very fast, and told him: "Qingshan, my gate's Iron Locks Hall's hall master Wu came over, he wants to meet you, he has some matters he wants to discuss with you." His brain was revolving at high speed as he thought about how to tell this matter to Li Qingshan as smoothly as possible. But at the same time he didn't dare reveal too much either, fearing it might scare Li Qingshan into running away.

Li Qingshan said: "Even so, there was no need for sect master Liu to run this errand in person."

Liu Hong was a little embarrassed. The ranks were clearly distinguished inside their order. A hall master was one level higher compared to division masters and sub-gate masters. Those who could become hall masters were all first-grade experts, so they could naturally order about a division master like him.

"That pain in the ass hall master of yours also came for the spirit ginseng right? I was just about to go to [Suncheer House](#) and make things clear about this matter, you let the hall master go there and have a listen!" Li Qingshan didn't stop his steps as he forged ahead toward his goal, walking through streets and past alleys.

In case you missed it or forgot, Suncheer House is Suncheer's biggest restaurant, first seen when Ye Dachuan held a banquet there together with Li Qingshan to gather money and men to fight the Black Wind Camp.

Liu Hong quickly followed beside him: “This is absolutely unacceptable. I’m also doing this for your own good.”

The two of them walked through a narrow alley. Suddenly there was a big monk blocking the mouth of the alley, holding a [black steel Buddhist staff](#). He laughed mischievously as he looked at Li Qingshan. His face was already fierce-looking to begin with, and there was even a sinister scar cutting across. The laugh made it seem even more ferocious.

Liu Hong was greatly alarmed: “The Mad Monk Empty Slaughter!”

Li Qingshan looked at the brilliantly twinkling staff. It was yet another spiritual weapon. Indeed, so-called spiritual devices weren’t especially rare in this world.

Liu Hong didn’t dare to look at Empty Slaughter as he said in a quiet voice: “This man was once of the Baoling temple of outstanding fame inside the rivers and lakes, and served as a monk. Because of his heavy drinking and fondness for killing, he violated the rules of the temple and was expelled out from the temple gates. His mad nature exploded and he killed the crowd of monks inside the temple with the one hundred eight moves of his Mad Demon Staff Arts. He then changed his name to Empty Slaughter and murdered for money unhindered across the lands. There aren’t even any chicken or dog are left behind anywhere he goes. It’s said that he’d long ago reached the peak of the first-grade master realm, only a step away from an innate master.”

There were also quite a few men of the martial world observing

this scene from the dark. They whispered: “It’s really Empty Slaughter, never thought he’d actually come.” “Alas, looks like there won’t be any opportunity left for us.” “Stop talking, hurry to leave, we won’t be able to keep living if he finds us.” His ominous fame was truly resounding.

Empty Slaughter said: “Kid, take out the spirit ginseng and I’ll leave your corpse whole. I’ll perform ceremonies for your soul to find peace, and afterwards I’ll even burn ritual money every year for you.”

“I’ll talk about the matter of the spiritual ginseng in the restaurant. If you want it then come listen!” Li Qingshan sniffed, keenly smelling the flavor of alcohol on the monk’s body, the flavor of grease, as well as the scent of blood. His steps continued forward.

The Buddhist staff wave fiercely down, its iron rings bursting out with urgent cries.

Li Qingshan finally stopped his feet. The staff stopped only a hairbreadth away from the tip of his nose, the wild wind blowing up his hair.

“Sect leader Liu, you better first go back!” His voice appeared very serene on the surface, yet it also seemed like a volcano on the verge of exploding. The blood that had been still and silent for a long time finally boiled up.

Empty Slaughter became thoroughly enraged by Li Qingshan’s

disregard. He displayed the full might of the Hundred And Eight Moves Mad Demon Staff Art. The black staff broke through the air with a pointed hiss and transformed into layers upon layers of staff blurs, madly gushing forth like the tide.

The small alley was narrow and there was absolutely no place to hide. Li Qingshan clenched his fists, the bones of his hands making explosive crackling sounds as he faced the layers of staff blurs head on, not retreating but advancing instead.

How would Liu Hong dare to be caught in the middle of a battle between those two. He turned around and fled out of the alley. He heard rumbles booming behind him together with the screams of strong winds. The fierce battle between the two was in full swing.

Li Qingshan shifted and tossed about among the staff blurs. It was the first time he was witnessing the frightfulness of a first-grade master. The moves were not only strong and heavy, they were also meticulous and exquisite, not exposing any shred of opening. They firmly blocked Li Qingshan three steps away, not giving him any opportunity to close in.

“Clang Clang Clang Clang!”

The space available for Li Qingshan to dodge to was after all limited inside the small alley. His fists collided with the staff and produced a succession of loud cries, like the clashes of metal against metal.

Empty Slaughter was a little aghast inside. What martial arts did

this kid practice, he could actually frontally block his Mad Demon Staff with flesh and blood. But that aroused his vicious nature all the more. He strung together the strength of his entire body and smashed his staff down straight to the head. The momentum was dreadful to the extreme.

Li Qingshan's eyes shone bright all of a sudden. He'd spied the trace of an opening. He dashed forward and turned his fists into claws, trying to seize Empty Slaughter's [middle dantian](#), but he suddenly saw Empty Slaughter's face expose a smirk not matching with his crude and forthright image. A great sense of foreboding rose in his heart. "Not good!"

The "middle dantian" is a Chinese medicine spot in the middle of the chest. The "dantian" referred to in most xianxia stories would technically be the "lower dantian," while the "upper dantian" is located in the head/brain. The words can also mean castration though, I almost went with that...

Empty Slaughter suddenly changed his move. The staff switched from a chop to a horizontal sweep. That strike just then was unexpectedly a feint. The narrow alley restricted the display of this move, but rubble collapsed from the tall walls when the staff waved around, entirely unable to obstruct it.

Boom!

The staff struck Li Qingshan and sent him flying and crashing into the wall. The wall collapsed, and he tumbled into a courtyard, sweeping up a cloud of dust. Li Qingshan rolled several times on the ground. His insufficient battle experience had cost him this loss.

Chapter 74: Killing Empty Slaughter

Empty Slaughter's expression exposed pride at the success of his trick, but then it changed instantly. Li Qingshan's left hand was tightly clutching the staff as he knelt on one knee in the heap of rubble, and Empty Slaughter couldn't budge it a jot no matter how much strength he used.

Li Qingshan had looked like he had been thrashed away by the staff. In fact, he'd stretched his hand out and grabbed the staff at the critical moment, then he'd conveniently bumped on the wall. Ordinary second-grade masters would be injured even if they had displayed this reaction, but he seemed not to have a single of his hair harmed thanks to his bronze skin and iron bones.

His battle experience was insufficient, but he had a genuine gift for actual combat. His tactics and reactions when facing the enemy were all top among tops.

"Hehe, you court death." Empty Slaughter laughed with incomparable malevolence.

Li Qingshan felt a gust of powerful internal strength transmit along the staff and rush crazily inside his own body.

A contest of internal strength was the most ruthless trial of strength for martial artists. Whichever side took back his internal strength first after being unable to resist would be assaulted by internal strength inside his body, the dantian broken and the meridians torn apart. It was truly a struggle to the death.

Empty Slaughter was confident the internal strength he'd painstakingly cultivated for decades was absolutely not something Li Qingshan could block. In his eyes, Li Qingshan was an idiot who thought himself clever. It made him a little surprised when Li Qingshan didn't spit out blood and die on the spot, so he increased the output of his internal strength.

If one simply considered strength and weakness, then Empty Slaughter's internal strength was indeed above Li Qingshan's. Li Qingshan felt a gust of energy rush into his body and flow inside. This flow of energy was much more dense and turbid than his true qi, and he knew this was the so-called internal strength. Moreover, there was shred of spirituality among the turbidity. Empty Slaughter had almost cultivated to the innate realm, and he was only one step away from turning his internal strength into true qi.

But the problem was that Li Qingshan's true qi wasn't stored inside the dantian. Even more so for the meridians, he'd never even cultivated a single one of them. This flow of internal strength was quickly swallowed by the true qi inside Li Qingshan, and transformed into energy for his own body. It not only didn't cause any harm but benefited him instead. Li Qingshan actually didn't have any idea about counterattacking immediately and allowed Empty Slaughter to deliver his internal strength over.

Cold sweat poured on Empty Slaughter's forehead. Why was this kid so strange, was this the spirit ginseng's effect? He dared even less to relax his hands.

At this moment, a black shadow pounced down from the roof and

directly took Li Qingshan's gourd at his waist. There was actually someone who saw the right opportunity to "seek wealth from danger" and "fish out advantage from others' conflicts."

A green light flashed. The black shadow's entire person flapped down, falling on the ground, already transformed into two halves. Little An emerged and stabbed his sword over through the air, after conveniently cutting off that thief.

Empty Slaughter was startled when he suddenly saw this extremely strange skeleton. The revolution of his internal strength slowed down by a third. He had already been scared by that sword strike that wasn't inferior to a wholehearted attack from a first grade master, so much so that his soul was about to fly out of his body.

Li Qingshan sensed that Empty Slaughter had taken his internal strength back and was about to give up his staff to escape. How would he miss such a great opportunity. The true qi in his entire body overflowed like a tide breaking through a dam and seize the opportunity to drill into Empty Slaughter's body.

The true qi wasn't strong, but it was extremely sharp. Empty Slaughter's internal strength tried to block it but it cut through like a knife cutting through butter, charging and rampaging through the meridians, dantian, and internal organs.

Empty Slaughter suddenly sprayed out a mouthful of fresh blood as he was sent flying out backward, hitting the walls on both sides in quick succession before he ended up buried among the rubble.

Li Qingshan stood up, his eyes still staring straight at that pile of rubble as he exhorted: “Little An, silence them!”

Little An immediately concealed himself inside the darkness. Three miserable screams sounded from three different spots, each separated by but a breath. Apart from this dear friend just now, there were other people who had wanted to try fishing as well. They had seen Little An’s appearance.

Boom!

The world exploded in chaos. Empty Slaughter once again stood up, his body tottering about as he watched Li Qingshan with incomparable savagery. He stretched his hand and fished out a porcelain bottle from his bosom.

Speak of the devil and the devil doth truly appear! Li Qingshan clearly saw the spiritual light inside the bottle after the cork was pulled out. Since even a second-grade master like Xiong Xiangwu could take out a “Strong Diamond Divine Talisman,” then wouldn’t those first-grade masters with even stronger martial abilities and a wider circle of friends also have a trump card or two that didn’t belong to the category of martial arts.

Empty Slaughter took out a fiery red dan pill and threw it inside his mouth, biting it to pieces. His stature immediately inflated as if it were filling with air. His arms became twice as thick, and his muscles bunched together, exposing blue veins.

Sudden Qi Body Breaking Pellet!

Empty Slaughter had bankrupted all his properties in order to obtain this pill bottle back then, and he'd even looted thirteen rich households in succession, murdering over a hundred men, before he was able to exchange three pills in return. This pill couldn't be used to train martial arts with, and it couldn't heal injuries either. Not only it wasn't beneficial, it was harmful instead to take it. But it could stimulate the body's potential in the space of an instant, allowing one to erupt with a strength resembling that of monsters, demons, ghosts and gods.

Empty Slaughter issued a wild roar and charged toward Li Qingshan like a war chariot.

Li Qingshan took in a mouthful of air. He didn't choose to face it head on but took out the [Cursive Sword Script] from his back instead.

Sword qi brushed out.

Li Qingshan walked out from the small alley that had become ruins, brushing away dust and dirt from his body. "It's unfortunate I couldn't leave your corpse whole, and can't pray for your soul to find peace, and I have even less time to burn sacrificial money for you." Behind him, the small alley had already become crumbled fences and dilapidated walls. Empty Slaughter's body, the body of an ominous mad monk, had been obliquely split into two halves. His eyes were still wide open as he died full of grievances.

It hadn't only been to conceal Little An that he'd told him to silence people, it had also been to conceal this spiritual device in his own hands. He had a feeling that this calligraphy scroll would blow up a storm even bigger than the spirit ginseng if it were to be seen by someone observant.

Li Qingshan lifted the Buddhist staff in his hand. According to the green bull, this kind of spiritual weapons with simply a layer of spiritual light attached over were all bottom level trash spiritual devices, but it was still a spiritual weapon when all was said and done. He wasn't willing to throw it away. His other hand was holding that porcelain bottle with a pill inside. It was precisely the same kind Empty Slaughter had used.

"So it turns out first-grade masters were only so-so. But I'm probably not an innate master either!" Li Qingshan thought about it with some curiosity. He had confidence he could defeat Empty Slaughter using his martial abilities only, without relying on any external item. And his trump card wasn't any weaker than others' either when the time came to use them.

Li Qingshan carried the staff and continued toward the restaurant. Those martial artists who'd observed this battle from inside the darkness were all shocked into silence at this moment. In the battle between the Mad Monk and the Black Tiger, one was a peak first-grade master of outstanding fame, and one was a greenhorn later generation kid. No one had expected the Black Tiger would win, and win so easily to boot.

Liu Hong hurried back to the Iron Fist Gate and reported back to

hall master Wu and lord Feng.

“Mad Monk Empty Slaughter! He also came to take the spirit ginseng and break through to the innate realm. Things are really inauspicious for that kid, I guess he won’t be able to live.” Hall master Wu frowned. It would be difficult to seize victory even if he were the one to face Mad Monk Empty Slaughter. Of course he wasn’t worried whether Li Qingshan lived or died, he was only worried about the spirit ginseng. “Lord Feng, what do you think?”

Lord Feng said, “Let’s go take a look. I’ll take care of this monk. He’s made the Eagle Wolf Guard’s list of names long ago already, it was only that my superiors haven’t been able to spare a hand to tidy him up yet. Since we’ve bumped into him today, then the time of his death has come.”

The three of them obtained the news of Mad Monk Empty Slaughter’s death as soon as they stepped out of the Iron Fist Gate.

The expressions on the three’s faces were each different. Liu Hong was the most surprised. In the eyes of a second-grade master like him, Mad Monk Empty Slaughter was fundamentally an unequaled existence, but he’d unexpectedly died in such a short time.

Chapter 75: Innate Master

Hall master Wu felt glad he hadn't come alone. He had increasingly higher expectations for the spirit ginseng. As long as he could eat the spirit ginseng and break through to the innate realm, then there would be one more protector in the Iron Fist Gate, protector Wu. And he would have no need to lower his voice and stay humble like this when faced again with this lord Feng of the Eagle Wolf Guard.

Lord Feng smiled: "He actually has some skills. This kid is only fifteen years old?"

"Yes, he'll be sixteen past the new year. Now he's most likely gone to Suncheer House." Liu Hong had also investigated a bit. He hadn't directly told them Li Qingshan refused to come, out of fear he would anger lord Feng.

"All the experts must be there at this time, it's somewhat interesting."

Li Qingshan had already climbed upstairs Suncheer House. There were already no ordinary customer left up and down the restaurant. The crowd was vaguely split into several rival camps.

Even if everyone in the building had already heard the news about him executing Mad Monk Empty Slaughter, their hearts still filled with shock when they saw him carry Empty Slaughter's famous weapon Mad Demon Staff with their own eyes.

Li Qingshan looked around left and right. There were only four persons who could make him take notice.

One was a one-armed old man with a great saber on his back. One was a middle-aged lady with a cold and gloomy face. One was a wealthy man with a face filled with smiles. One was the pale-faced Wei Dandong fitted with a long sword.

Someone who'd long mixed within the rivers and lakes would have turned pale with fright at this moment if they had been standing there instead of Li Qingshan.

That Wan Hao, could it really be the Mad Blade Gate's sect leader Wan Hao. Men of the rivers and lakes called him One-Armed Blade King. He'd killed eighteen riders with one arm and one blade like a storm, his fame shaking Low Sand City. As to this Wei Dandong, he was most likely the Wei Dandong born from the Cold Marple Academy, called the Life Snatching Scholar. His Thirteen Life Snatching Swords possessed superb artistry and reached perfection.

As to these Chu Xin and Lu Tingrui, they even more extraordinary. Smile-Faced Ghost Chu Xin, Wasp Sword Lu Tingrui, both of them were figures that would be a thorn in any first-grade master's side. Those fours were all currently first grade-masters without exception.

There was no weapon in their hands that didn't glow with spiritual light. Since the weapons they used were uncommon, then would they also possess fearsome trump cards just like Empty Slaughter?

On top of that, each of them had a large retinue except for Wei Dandong. Their sect members and disciples were innumerable. There was no one else of the martial world who could occupy a seat upstairs the restaurant apart from those parties.

Of course, there was someone else now.

Li Qingshan walked to the center of the restaurant as if there were no one else there. It was as if he'd walked into a pack of beasts. His slim self didn't look very strong, but he seemed to exude the might of a king among beasts.

Just like his nickname, the Black Tiger!

Li Qingshan sat down firmly and stuck the Buddhist staff inside the floor. "Bring food!"

The waiter bought up a tray with shaking hands, the wine splashing all over the tray.

"Your wine is spilled. I'll offer you a cup!" Wei Dandong grabbed a cup of wine from his table and threw it over.

The cup of wine whizzed through the air, but not a single drop spilled out.

This was merely the more ordinary of probings, testing the

depths of Li Qingshan's martial arts. Following a normal script, Li Qingshan ought to likewise expose the same kind of tour-de-force to shock the crowd. Everyone fixated their attention on him.

Li Qingshan waved his hand. The cup of wine broke to pieces. Wei Dandong's face became even paler, while the others were secretly trying to guess whether Li Qingshan had been injured when exchanging blows with Empty Slaughter.

"I have my own wine!" Li Qingshan lifted his gourd and pulled out the cork. He lifted his head and drank up with loud gulps. He paused a little. "It's even spiritual wine!"

Everyone's eyes became red. They one and all reined in their energies and waited, itching to act. They weren't only taking the others into consideration, they were even more deterred by that pitch-black monk staff.

Li Qingshan felt his true qi restore back to fullness. "Correct, the spirit ginseng is precisely with me!" This attracted another uproar in the restaurant.

Chu Xin said, "What conditions are you asking to take it out, how much silver. You name a price, everything is open for discussion!"

Li Qingshan lowered his head as if he were thinking it over.

Lu Tingrui said urgently when she saw Li Qingshan being tempted, "Kid, do you what what's this fatty's nickname in the

martial world?”

“What’s he called?”

“Smile-Faced Ghost. He looks amiable, but in fact he’s the most ruthless and greediest, he won’t even spit out bones when he eats someone. You can’t believe him even if he promised you thousands or ten thousands of silver taels.”

Chu Xiu was still chuckling. He dug out a pile of silver notes and put them on the table. “Don’t say nonsense, I’ve never cheated young nor old in any business deal. Is this silver enough, if it’s not enough just consider it a down payment.” This wasn’t a spirit ginseng, it was an opportunity to promote to the realm of an innate master. You could earn back the silver no matter how much you spent as long as you could become an innate master.

Wei Dandong coughed loudly a few times. “I need this spirit ginseng to save my life. Whoever wants to snatch it from me wants my life, and I can only fight to the death!”

Wan Hao said: “There’s not much left to this old man’s life, I won’t regret anything.”

Li Qingshan fiddled with the wine gourd and said with a faint smile, “There are four persons here, who should I give the spirit ginseng to? You people hurry to decide between yourselves!” It certainly wasn’t to show off the bravery of a coarse man that he’d come, but because he’d expected this kind of scene. He’d also thought of a way to settle this matter for good.

Chu Xin laughed mildly and said: “Don’t fall prey to his dissension-sowing. Are we really going to go out all and kill each others here, this would really be a huge loss. Better to join hands and do this kid in, then split the spirit ginseng into four parts. No loss and steady profit for all, what do you think?”

Wei Dandong said, “It’s still an old ghost like you who’s best at thoroughly calculating the pros and cons. Three of us will have to die if we started to fight. Who dares to say they will be the last one standing?” He coughed several times in succession when his voice fell.

Wan Hao and Liu Tingrui both exposed a thoughtful expression.

Li Qingshan thought: really worthy of old hands of the martial world, they won’t be led by the nose, their reaction is pretty fast. Seeing he was about to be attacked from all sides, he put his hand on the gourd and prepared himself to proceed with his plan.

His plan was very simple. It was merely to eat the spirit ginseng in front of everyone. The spirit ginseng had been used to soak wine for so long and its spiritual energy had already become very faint, so he should be able to bear it.

Of course, he might infuriate those first-grade masters this way and cause them to join hands in attacking him, but Li Qingshan believed escaping wouldn’t be a problem. But a greater possibility was that those people wouldn’t act at all. Without the temptation from the spirit ginseng, those old hands of the martial world would

certainly not be willing to struggle to the death.

If he'd escaped, or if he'd secretly eaten the spirit ginseng, then the troubles would endlessly nag at him, possibly even more and more as time went on. He could only spread out the news about the spirit ginseng being eaten under the gaze of those famous figures, and settle this matter for good.

This idea did definitely not rely on mere wisdom, it relied even more on strength. If he were a second-grade master, then there was no use saying anything. But it was precisely because he was a first-grade master and had a strength tyrannical enough to kill Mad Monk Empty Slaughter that he could make people hesitate in front of the consequences.

Some people walked inside this restaurant at this precise juncture. They drew everyone's gaze.

The one in the lead was precisely lord Feng. He wore his black-colored dark wolves garments with a wolf embroidered on it using a dark pattern. One would need a certain angle to spot the wolf spreading its jaws open and float together with the clothes, looking as if it were a living creature.

A scabbard made from green sharkskin hung at his hips, sheathing a wind-stitching blade with a green catseye inlaid on the golden hilt. His pair of triangular eyes were slightly upturned, as if he never paid attention to anyone else.

Li Qingshan saw his body release a brilliance similar to a spiritual

weapon. Two words rose inside his heart without needing anyone's introduction: "Innate master!"

Chapter 76: Might Of Eagles And Wolves

Lu Tingrui shouted in shock, “The Eagle Wolf Guard!” Chu Xin was finally unable to keep smiling. Wei Dandong’s face became white until it resembled a piece of paper. Wan Hao’s straight spine seemed to shrink somewhat.

Li Qingshan noticed lord Feng’s clothes then. It was indeed much more awe-inspiring than the mountain village clothes he was wearing. The most eye-catching of all was the iron wolf badge that hung at his waist, its appearance the same as the wolf on his clothes. The wolf badge wasn’t big, but the spiritual light glowing from it was ten times more dazzling compared to the monk staff stuck in the floor.

Liu Hong and hall master Wu followed behind, their hearts alarmed as they took in the figures filling the building. So many masters had already actually been attracted over in space of a short half-month. Suncheer hadn’t been so lively for a long while.

Liu Hong threw a deep look at the monk staff, confirming once again the news he’d obtained weren’t wrong. He thought, “Li Qingshan, Li Qingshan, you’re indeed outstanding, but unfortunately the Eagle Wolf Guard is here today. Even if you were a dragon you’d still have to coil, even if you were a tiger you’d still have to crouch.”

Wan Hao said, “Does the Eagle Wolf Guard also have to stick its head inside this kind of dispute between people of the rivers and lakes?”

Chu Xin smiled bitterly and said, “My lord, you’re already an innate master, what need do you have to compete with us for it. How much money does this hall master Wu want. Your honored self please don’t hesitate to say, I’ll certainly not bargain.”

Lord Feng opened his mouth before Lu Tingrui and Wei Dandong even had time to speak. His resounding voice was biting, but the words he said were ten times more biting: “You all get the hell out of here!”

The expression on every one of them changed. The feeling of a lull before the storm permeated upstairs because of those words.

From the side, Hall master Wu added oil and vinegar to the fire, a fox exploiting the tiger’s prestige: “Lord Feng told you all to get lost, did none of you hear him?”

Li Qingshan frowned. This guard had a really unbridled arrogance. With his spiritual eyes opened thanks to the green bull’s tears, he could see that although lord Feng’s strength was higher than anyone present, it wasn’t high to the point it was wholly out of reach.

If those first-grade masters joined hands together, they could be very assured of killing him right there by relying on the trump cards in their hands, with all those disciples as cannon fodders on top. Moreover, those first-grade masters were all figures who could shake their own domain with a stamp of their feet, and who wouldn’t even blink at killing someone. They couldn’t possibly tolerate someone humiliating them in front of so many sect members and disciples.

“Hua!” Four first-grade masters stood up together, then leaped out of the windows without saying a word. Unexpectedly, they’d truly what “gotten the hell out” of there. It was as if they’d broken wind earlier instead of saying those ruthless words, as if they’d raised their hands and violently slapped their own faces loud and crisp.

They still didn’t dare offend the Eagle Wolf Guard even if they ardently desired the spirit ginseng in order to save or extend their lives. As men of the martial world, they didn’t lack the courage to struggle to the death, but even so what lord Feng represented wasn’t a man alone.

Sect members and disciples followed behind with dejected faces, cleanly crashing out. Such a big restaurant became entirely empty in the blink of an eye, leaving only Li Qingshan standing stunned in place.

“Lord Feng’s formidable renown shakes the rivers and lakes!” Hall master Wu offered flattery in haste.

Lord Feng’s expression relaxed somewhat, exposing some pride, very satisfied with the effect he’d produced. He didn’t even move his feet and told Li Qingshan with a proud commanding tone: “Present the spirit ginseng!”

He’d made four first-grade masters scam out with one sentence. There was even less of a need to be polite facing the one of Li Qingshan. Li Qingshan should be overawed by his prestige and

would obediently take out the spirit ginseng out. As to how the Iron Fist Gate wanted to proceed from there, that was another matter.

Li Qingshan lowered his head, some frustration actually showing on his face. Something known as the wuxia dream smashed to pieces with a loud rumble.

Hall master Wu said with impatience: “Hurry up hurry up!” It seemed he wasn’t trying to obtain something from someone else but recovering something that belonged to himself instead.

Liu Hong said: “Qingshan, hurry up, hall master Wu promised to take you in into the Iron Locks Hall. You only need to nod your head and you’ll immediately become a great figure of the Iron Gate Sect. You can go to great places like Blessed Peace or even Clear River. The old man really envies you.”

Dragon Li also lowered his voice and said: “Qingshan, you just agree!”

“Who is it, who dares to stir trouble in my great Suncheer!” Ye Dachuan led some bailiffs as he came over hurriedly.

Hall master Wu said with displeasure: “Who are you?” He completely disregarded the official robes on Ye Dachuan. He’d seen at a glance there wasn’t a single shred of internal strength or true qi on him, and thought, nowadays really everyone dares to butt in.

Ye Dachuan said with his nostrils up in the air, “I am Suncheer’s county magistrate, the lord prefect’s little brother-in-law.” Then he looked again at lord Feng and observed the badge at his waist. “Dark Wolf Guard! You must be the reinforcement sent by the lord prefect. You’ve done well, I’ll report your merits to the lord prefect.”

He hadn’t even dared to stick his head out when he heard about a group of martial world people there, but he’d straighten his spine and hurried over as soon as he heard the Eagle Wolf Guard had arrived. He even went forward to pat lord Feng’s shoulder while talking.

Li Qingshan truly admired Ye Dachuan’s courage at this moment.

Lord Feng frowned. He moved his feet away and made Ye Dachuan pat the air. His right hand rested on his weapon, but in the end he was intimidated by the two words “lord prefect” and didn’t act: “This official is on business for the government, may my lord move away.”

Ye Dachuan said, “What business. Oh, you’re talking about Qingshan, he’s this county’s constable, in theory he’s even a level above you, hahaha!”

The Eagle Wolf Guard’s structure was split between the Eagle Captains and Wolf Captains. Eagle as main leader and wolf as deputy, both commanding the pack of wolves. The Eagle captains would often temporarily fill in as a constable. That was why Li Qingshan’s constable clothes was a simplified version of the the dark wolf uniform. Moreover, Blessed Peace and Suncheer both

belonged to the county category in name, and the status of a constable like Li Qingshan was naturally a level higher than a bailiff.

Lord Feng seemed to have suffered extraordinary shame and humiliation. He pulled out his wind-stitching blade with a “shua” and fiercely lifted the two feet long blade edge, then drew a seven feet long blade scar on the floor.

Ye Dachuan retreated back with great alarm and tripped down on the door sill, his plump and round body rolling far away. The bailiffs yelled “My lord!” and tried to block him, but they were knocked down instead.

No matter your privileges and status, without the support from strength, someone would very quickly trample you down to earth, flatten your privileges and break your status.

But in the end the official robes on Ye Dachuan saved. If someone else dared to talk like that to lord Feng, he’d cut you down even if you were a first-grade master.

Lord Feng decided not to waste any word with Ye Dachuan and said directly to Li Qingshan: “Take out the spirit ginseng, don’t make me say it a third time.” Beams of light glinted on and off from the blade in his hand, the brilliant light shooting in all direction with an awe-inspiring killing aura.

Li Qingshan couldn’t help but sigh in lament. So this was an innate master. He thought a bit and said: “Go fuck yourself!”

Lord Feng wondered if he'd heard wrong. He froze stunned for a full second. A burst of mocking laughter spread over from somewhere. Lord Feng said with explosive anger: "You're courting death!" The wind-stitching blade sliced through the air, sweeping everything in its path. He was going to first kill Li Qingshan, then kill that person who'd dared to mock him from within the darkness.

The edge of the blade was several feet away from his face, but Li Qingshan already felt an eerie chilliness press his way, sealing off any path of escape. He quickly grabbed the monk staff beside him and brandished it against the edged blade.

A loud "Clang" echoed. The chair Li Qingshan sat on broke to pieces with a loud rumble. A deep mark was left on the monk staff twinkling with spiritual light. Even the spiritual light had dimmed by a lot.

Chapter 77: Red Wolf Captain

“Good good good!” Lord Feng said, “I won’t kill you today, I’ll break the muscles and tendons on your hands and feet, then take you back to the Eagle Wolf prison so you can properly simmer there!”

Eagle Wolf prison!

Even hall master Wu who’d come together with lord Feng trembled from head to toes when he heard those three words. The Eagle Wolf prison was a great prison the Eagle Wolf Guard had established themselves. The major criminals they apprehended were tossed inside. It had specially assigned torturers who carried the duty of extorting confessions by force. Rumors said that no one so far had been able to resist ten tortures out of the hundred and eight tortures. Even tough fellows from the martial world were squeezed into mud until they knelt on the ground, calling their tormentors grandfather and begging for a quick death.

Li Qingshan’s hand touched the [Cursive Sword Script] behind his back, already prepared to abscond like the wind. Things had happened too abruptly. With this lord Feng’s egotistical arrogance, it would be no use even if he ate the spirit ginseng now.

He might have an opportunity to kill this man first thing with the roll of [[The Calligraphy and the Sword](#)] on his back. He’d already seen several spiritual devices now, and none of them could compare to the one in his hands. But he had no absolute confidence. Since even first-grade masters had their own trump cards, then what kind of trump card an innate master would

conceal, an innate master from a great organization to boot!

Reference to the wuxia novel *The Book and The Sword* by Jin Yong. In case you didn't know, Jin Yong is a household name in China, he's sold something like a record billion volumes in China in total IIRC and almost single-handedly popularized the wuxia genre.

[“Legalist Statecraft](#) – Sanction Wind Blade!”

Legalist Statecraft is a direct reference to the Legalist school of thought developed during Warring States period (~475 BC to 221 BC), focusing on the philosophy of government. The leading founder is Han Fei whom you might have seen in the novel *Step into the Past* by Huang Yi, and then later led by the prime minister of the First Qin Emperor, Li Si (after he poisoned Han Fei) who adopted the school's principles in administrating the empire. Later the Han dynasty adopted the same administrative system almost without any change.

Lord Feng's aura changed entirely as he lifted his blade to the apex. The light of his blade solidified into a three feet long wind blade.

The so-called sanction was also known as a killing sentence, that is, a death penalty.

The blade hadn't moved yet that a harsh and imposing atmosphere surpassing ordinary martial arts was already brutally pounding Li Qingshan's consciousness. He felt as if he'd committed crimes worthy of death and had come to the end of his road as he knelt on the stage, his eyes closed as he waited for death, waited for the wave of the executioner's blade to kill him, entirely

unable to summon any will to resist.

An ordinary first-grade master would have their martial arts greatly diminished even if they didn't forfeit their entire will, hard-pressed to escape from death. But what kind of temperament did Li Qingshan have. Red light exploded in his eyes, and his demonic and murderous nature cleanly drove off this influence at once.

“Tiger Demon Wild Hiss!” The true qi in his entire body gushed wildly, followed by an explosive shout. The wine jars in the restaurant exploded at the same time.

The two men's aura reached their pinnacle in the space of an instant. When they were about to clash together with blade and staff until only one was left alive, two beams of red light pierced forth, sending the Mad Demon Staff and the wind-stitching blade flying off at the same time.

Lord Feng said with shock and anger: “Who is it?!”

Li Qingshan didn't say anything. He was likewise shocked. He was even more speechless when his vision fell on the things that had sent their weapons flying out. It wasn't a divine sharp weapon but peanuts. They looked like the most ordinary of peanuts. Moreover, they still maintained their original shape intact even after colliding with the long blade and the monk staff.

“You, you're called Feng Zhang right? If you spent the time bullying kids on training instead, you wouldn't be stuck at the

second level of qi refining still.”

The voice drifted along, transmitting from every direction. There was absolutely no way to ascertain the whereabouts of the speaker. Li Qingshan suddenly lifted his head and looked toward the restaurant’s crossbeams. His eyes had captured a shred of spiritual light.

“Come the hell down!” Feng Zhang followed the direction of Li Qingshan’s gaze as he drew out a daoist [talisman](#) from within his sleeve and shot it toward the crossbeams.

The daoist talisman broke in the air and transformed into a ball of fire, its power even fiercer.

Li Qingshan could sense the astounding heat even standing there on the floor. There was no need to wonder about the outcome of being frontally hit by this fireball. So those were the means of an innate master. They had no need to awkwardly bite their own tongue like Xiong Xiangwu and could arouse the talisman’s energy directly with their true qi. And looking at Feng Zhang’s casual attitude, the talismans in his possession weren’t limited to the present one.

A shadow leaped down from the crossbeams. He stretched out his hand and grabbed the fireball before landing on the floor, then casually extinguished the fireball with a squeeze.

It seemed he had merely done an insignificant thing as he looked at Li Qingshan. “Strange, you were able to spot me with a trivial

first level of qi refining?” He actually saw through at first glance that Li Qingshan wasn’t possessed of internal strength, but replete with true qi instead.

Li Qingshan only clearly saw the newcomer then. He was around twenty-five to twenty-six years old, his eyebrows like the crescent moon and his eyes like cold stars. His face was like a halo of jade, and he truly was handsome and stylish. Spiritual qi revolved around around his body like a flow of water. It shone like a torch inside the darkness, hence Li Qingshan had discovered his existence.

The red clothes on his body had a style close to the dark wolf garments, but it was looser than the dark wolf garments, and the pattern embroidered on it was a red wolf laughing to the sky. A similar red copper badge hung at his hips.

“Red...Red Wolf Captain!” Hall master Wu could recognize him even if he never saw him face to face. Red copper was a level higher than dark iron inside the Eagle Wolf Guard. A Wolf Captain commanded the pack of wolves and his authority was below a mere few people inside the whole Clear River prefecture while above innumerable others. He was a character of great power who could decide a man’s life or death in one word.

“Captain Hua!” The originally incomparably arrogant Feng Zhang immediately became like a mouse who’d seen a cat. He was so regretful he’d have liked nothing better than slap his own face.

It was no wonder he was so impudent. He’d already joined the Eagle Wolf Guard at a young age. It could be seen as the pride of

youth. He'd been accustomed to acting arrogant and overbearing in ordinary times, so he hadn't put anyone in his eyes when he'd come to this small Suncheer City. Making four first-grade masters retreat with one sentence had made his haughtiness reach its peak, but he'd been unexpectedly pushed off from that peak by Li Qingshan. So he'd acted with indignant anger, but then things hadn't unfolded so smoothly.

He had been about to display his consummate skills to take revenge and wipe off his humiliation, but he'd been interrupted midway, his weapon tossed away from his hand. He naturally didn't think about too many things under the shock and anger. Could the opposite party match rampage tit for tat facing the Eagle Wolf Guard? But how could he imagine he'd provoke a Red Wolf Captain. One had to know that even an ordinary Red Wolf wouldn't leave the Clear River capital without good reasons. It was the same feeling as suddenly seeing a big shark inside a small pond, a feeling filled with unimaginable horror.

“You actually recognize me, we've only met once right?”

“This subordinate doesn't dare to forget captain Hua. It's a rare honor for captain Hua to remember this subordinate.” Feng Zhang lowered his head and bent his waist down, his attitude extremely deferential.

Any newcomer joining the Eagle Wolf Guard in the Clear River prefecture had to report to the prefecture capital and meet the two captains. Feng Zhang had been no exception, and he naturally couldn't forget this superiors' superior, captain Hua, Hua Chengzan.

Hua Chengzan said: “Haven’t you been dispatched to Blessed Peace under Zhuo Zhibi, why did you come here?”

Feng Zhang’s brain revolved at full speed. The degree of his single-minded nervousness was higher than when he was ready to exchange blows with Li Qingshan. He selected his words and was about to answer.

Hua Chengzan waved his hand and said: “No matter, old Wang is also here, come meet him!”

Old Wang!

Feng Zhang’s heart shook dramatically. The one Hua Chengzan spoke about was naturally not any anonymous old Wang from the neighborhood, but the Clear River head constable, the Red Eagle Captain Wang Pushi. Because of this name, people gave him the title of “old Wang,” meaning “old king,” but not many dared to call him by this name. Men of the rivers and lake had a saying, “[Rather meet the king of hell rather than meet the old king. Once you meet the old king, you will also meet the king of hell.](#)”

This is also a quote from the wuxia novel The Book and the Sword by Jin Yong. It’s a reference to Wang Weiyang, a character in the book famed to be invincible

Hall master Wu was keeping quiet to the side in fear. His brain rumbled loudly. He’d merely wanted to snatch a spirit ginseng from the hands of a later generation kid, how did he attract such powerful figures. Don’t mention a trivial hall master like him,

even a protector, even the gate master would have to have to carefully accompany those two figures with a smile. Why did they appear together in this small Suncheer City.

Hua Chengzan said to Li Qingshan, “Kid, follow me, someone wants to meet you!”

Chapter 78: White Eagle Captain

Li Qingshan could only follow behind. Refusing now would merely be courting his own humiliation. No one could say “no” in front of absolute power. His brain went over everything he’d seen and heard at high speed. What was the second level of qi refining, wasn’t it the innate level? The one he was soon going to meet was also a great figure inside the Eagle Wolf Guard. Why did he want to see him, it couldn’t also be for the spirit ginseng?

His brain was full of interrogations he couldn’t answer. The imperial court’s strength was even far above his imagination. Rather than saying the imperial court used great wealth and high status to enlist those powerful men to its service, it was better to say that the powerful men had established the imperial court to rule all under the heavens. The greater the abilities, the greater the responsibilities, this was only a fantasy in American movies. The reality was, the greater the abilities, the greater the privileges.

The three of them traveled out of the city as those thoughts turned inside his head. Hua Chengzan walked in the front and seemed to be floating forward. His pace became faster and faster but he left no trace behind when he stepped on the snow.

Feng Zhang mobilized the true qi in his whole body and strove to follow behind. Although he was far away from Hua Chengzan’s chic, one could still see he used the same kind of steps.

There was no more such elegance when one looked at Li Qingshan beside them. He leaped up and fell down, every one of his steps crossing the distance of several dozen steps as he

maneuvered every bone and every muscle in his body. There was a rough and primitive heroic air about it. He was actually able to follow them.

Out of the three, Hua Chengzan and Feng Zhang operated their qi while Li Qingshan used his strength. The difference between them manifested itself immediately.

Feng Zhang thought: I would truly be unable to follow if this kid used all his energy to flee. It looks like there's more to him than an ordinary first-grade master. Wait until I see captain Wang, I'll report it and waste his martial arts first thing.

Hua Chengzan's vision was actually much more penetrating. He was also secretly assessing Li Qingshan. "First level of qi refining. The true qi is still very weak, but his blood energy is very powerful. It must be the effect of the spirit ginseng, and he's also cultivated some kind of body tempering technique."

Feng Zhang boldly said: "Captain Hua, what business brought you here together with captain Wang?" What could have dispatched those two captains.

Hua Chengzan threw a smiling glance at the two of them and said, "Boss Gu came. What for exactly, I don't know either."

Li Qingshan saw Feng Zhang freeze for a long while. Then it looked as if his reaction had suddenly settled in and his expression greatly changed. His true qi became chaotic from head to toes in an instant, while his steps staggered. He narrowly avoided slipping

down and adjusted his posture with great difficulties before catching up once more, his head facing down as he was lost in thoughts.

Li Qingshan became even more curious as to what kind of character that “boss Gu” was. Hua Chengzan said earlier someone wanted to meet him, not that “old Wang” wanted to meet him. Was it possible the one he was talking about was precisely this boss Gu.

Outside Suncheer City, inside a snowy world wrapped in silver silk, under a [Huangshan pine at the foot of the mountains](#), there was a long woven mat laid there who knew when, together with a small table made of red sandalwood. There were several extremely refined drinking vessels on the table. At the side, a small cauldron boiled above a small stove made of red clay.

Two people sat face to face, drinking wine and admiring the snow, elegant and free of vulgarity as if they weren't of this world.

One of them was precisely the one who possessed great authority over all criminal matters in Clear River prefecture, Wang Pushi. His real age was already above eighty, but he seemed merely around forty thanks of his qi refining. That famously grim face of his was presently brimming with a smile that resembled a spring breeze in May.

An eagle had given him a piece of news and summoned him from the inexhaustible flourish of the Clear River capital to this remote and desolate small Suncheer City thousand miles away. But he was not only not angry, he felt greatly honored instead.

“Old Wang, your cultivation has made much progress again. This Clear River prefecture will soon be too small for you.”

This nickname of Wang Pushi's wasn't something anyone could call him with. He gave even vice-captain Hua Chengzan the eye when he called him old Wang, but he felt even more honored when the one facing him called him like that. He leaned his body forward. “I only wish to be a wolf at your excellency's orders.”

“I had my heart set on letting little Hua fill in your position. Only.”

“Little Hua couldn't make something of himself and has failed to live up to your excellency's expectations. Oh, they came.”

“Big boss Gu, I led the man here for you!” Hua Chengzan was all smiles, then he went forward and grasped the furnace lid as he said: “Old Wang, is the wine still not ready?”

Wang Pushi slapped Hua Chengzan's hand away and said as he stared him down, “Stop using random names. Quietly sit down. This needs an hour and a half before the taste comes through.”

Hua Chengzan sucked in a mouthful of cold air. He covered his hand and sat cross-legged to one side. “Old Wang, you act really too heavily.” He said to boss Gu: “Now you know how he bullies me in ordinary times!”

Li Qingshan had already seen the two persons sitting under the Huangshan pine from far away thanks to his spiritual eyes. If the spiritual qi on Hua Chengzan could be described as flowing like water, then it was frozen into ice on this Wang Pushi, as if the essence within had been congealed. He attracted the spiritual qi between heaven and earth with a single raise of the hand or a single lift of the foot. It was filled with unspeakable mystery.

But Li Qingshan's attention fell entirely on that "boss Gu" when he came under the pine. His line of sight wouldn't budge an iota no matter how many profound mysteries were on Wang Pushi.

Pure white clothes, loose and elegant, spread softly around on the bamboo mat as they seemed to merge into one with the vast expanses of whiteness between heaven and earth.

A face that could overturn the world watched Li Qingshan with a smile yet not a smile, lucid and elegant just like the snow, but also concealing a once a generation glamour.

Li Qingshan hadn't believed in any love at first sight before. He'd hadn't believed he could still have his so-called breath taken away after undergoing the impact of countless beautiful women on the internet in his previous world.

But at this moment he was willing to believe in love at first sight. He was even more willing to believe this world had beauty his previous world couldn't compare to. His heart slammed faster and faster; he was about to lose control of himself.

He'd once spoken conceited claptrap under the influence of alcohol, saying he wanted to "bed the most beautiful women in the world." This was originally a mere joke after wine for him, but now there was an intense and violent thought budding inside him. He wanted to take her as wife!

Feng Zhang's attitude was diametrically opposed to his however. He only threw a glance over before lowering his face, as if the one in front of him wasn't a woman of absolute beauty, but a scourge like great floods and wild beasts.

Hua Chengzan threw a contemptuous sidelong glance at Feng Zhang, then watched Li Qingshan with a smile. But lament also slid across his eyes. Only the most haughty and most egotistical person would dare to directly look into her eyes this way. Then they would be forever unable to extricate themselves once immersed within.

"Boss Gu" coughed lightly once and sniffed: "When was the last time you took a bath?"

The voice was as pleasant to hear as the flow of a chilly ice spring, but the words made Li Qingshan stiffen blankly on the spot. A certain image of perfection somewhat crumbled inside his heart. He very much wanted to roar, "You can't say this kind of words." In his mind, even if she couldn't make fresh flowers bloom as soon as she opened her mouth or drip out honeyed sweetness just like in fairy tales for children, she still should be a little more poetic, a little more aesthetic.

Hua Chengzan couldn't resist laughing up loudly. "Haha."

“I...” Li Qingshan had no idea how to answer for a moment. Even if he trained all day long, it still wasn’t as bad as having any bad smell on his body! But thanks to this, he also woke up from the obsession he was wallowing in just then.

Li Qingshan noticed then that a small silver eagle hung at her waist, just like on Wang Pushi’s hips. A white eagle spreading its wing was also faintly visible when the snowy light shone upon her white clothes. The wings spread all the way to her sleeves, every feather painstakingly crafted down to the smallest detail, just like a [feather dress](#) from the legends.

The feather dress is said to be the dress of divine immortals. Also the dress worn by angel-like creatures in some variation of Buddhism.

She was a White Eagle Captain.

Chapter 79: Gu Yanying

Li Qingshan opened his mouth and said: “I’m called Li Qingshan. May I ask the elder sister’s honored and distinguished name?” He wanted to call her young lady, but although she was noble, she was absolutely not one of those young ladies from great families growing inside their boudoirs. Then he changed his mind and wanted to call her young girl, but although she was young, she didn’t suit those two words, or rather those two words didn’t deserve to be used in addressing her.

Perhaps [fairy](#) would have been the best choice, but even if he’d never held any sensitivity toward that word before, it still would have felt somewhat like lowering his head. In the end he could only call her an awkward “elder sister,” just like [Xu Xian first meeting with the White Maiden over the Western Lake](#).

Fairy: 仙子, not the small winged fairy from occidental folklore, but a woman possesses the qualities an immortal: noble, wise, beautiful, elegant, refined, able, etc etc.

Xu Xian and the White Maiden, or Madam White Snake, are central characters of the Legend of the White Snake, one of the most famous folklore stories in China.

Hua Chengzan really held some admiration for Li Qingshan. Back then he hadn’t even been able to string a coherent sentence together. This mountain boy’s guts really weren’t small.

“I’m called Gu Yanying. Do you know why I have called you here, little brother Qingshan.” Gu Yanying lightly waved an elaborate jade-ribbed folding fan in her hand. Her smile carried a little witty amusement, but her eyes seemed very distant.

Little brother Qingshan?! Li Qingshan would rather martial artists call him “Tiger Descending the Mountains” for a lifetime instead. But then he thought that he was only fifteen to sixteen years old. Maybe he really was the little brother type in her eyes.

The sorrow was even heavier in the depths of Hua Chengzan’s eyes.

Wang Pushi’s eyebrows bunched tightly together. How was Li Qingshan deserving of her calling him little brother. But he’d always known her temperament was free and she did as she wished, so there wasn’t much he could say. Then again, on second thoughts, he wouldn’t have had the qualification to sit face to face with her either if not for her temperament.

Li Qingshan pondered which things he had on him that people were aware of and were also worth taking out. There was only the spirit ginseng: “You also came for the spirit ginseng?” If so he could only gift the spirit ginseng way. It wasn’t because of lust controlling his mind, but because his strength wasn’t good enough. Although he was possessed of an adoring passion, he still wasn’t a love-struck fool that would casually discard away his own dignity and principles. If Gu Yanying had truly come to snatch the spirit ginseng like the others, then her image in his mind would have been greatly lowered.

Wang Pushi laughed despite himself. Hua Chengzan laughed so much he’d already fallen down.

Gu Yanying was both quite angry and quite amused. She said with a pull at the corner of the lips: “Who would want something wet with your saliva!” The spirit ginseng precious as lifeblood for those first-grade masters of the martial world was merely a thing tainted with saliva in her eyes.

“The drink is ready!” Wang Pushi had the timing down and lifted the small cauldron to the table. Li Qingshan saw ten thousand beams of spiritual light shoot out the instant the cauldron’s lid was lifted. It reminded him of a certain anime from his former world.

The rich fragrance of the wine permeated the air. The accumulated snow melted down all around, retreating back. The Huangshan pine beside them clearly stretched upward and became increasingly more verdant.

Li Qingshan’s bones and muscles all seemed to become a little lighter all over his body. His true qi suddenly became lively. It was easy to imagine what would happen if one drank this wine. Compared with spiritual wine simply soaked from the spirit ginseng, this drink was more than ten times better.

Li Qingshan’s face flushed red. He felt he truly seemed like an ignorant villager at this moment, guarding a piece of pickled pig meat as if it were a first-class delicacy. He felt so embarrassed he wanted to find a hole and hide in it. He actually wished she’d really come to snatch the spirit ginseng instead.

Gu Yanying sniffed gently and said with a smile: “A hundred years old [Bodhi](#) brew! Old Wang you’re considerate!”

The Bodhi Tree is the sacred fig tree under which Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment and became Buddha in the legends. The name has come to apply to sacred fig trees in general. Often depicted as possessing some kind of magical power in Chinese fantasy/xianxia stories.

Wang Pushi said: “I knew the captain likes alcohol, so I forcefully dug out some from old brother Tian. Among the multitude of people, farming families are still the most expert at brewing wine.”

Then he personally poured the wine into the pot. He threw a glare at Hua Chengzan: “Why aren’t you pouring the wine yet?”

Huang Chengzan stood up and poured two cups of wine. Wang Pushi said: “What about yourself?” Hua Chengzan chuckled with a “xi xi.” He also poured a cup for himself.

Gu Yanying said with a faint smile: “Seeing is sharing. Little brother Qingshan, you come have a taste too!” But she actually ignored Feng Zhang to the side.

Feng Zhang’s ears had stood up when he smelled the wine’s fragrance. It was as if a hundred claws were scratching at his heart. One could say that the spirit ginseng wouldn’t have much effect on him, but this was the Bodhi wine from the legends!

He only needed one cup, one cup! Then he could break through the realm of second level qi refining and reach the third level. But no one actually mentioned him. He didn’t dare blame Gu Yanying and the other two, and he could only hate on Li Qingshan until his

teeth gnashed in anger.

Li Qingshan bent his head down and didn't say a word, but Hua Chengzan had actually stuffed a cup of wine into his hands already: "Come come come, count your lucky stars. Usually even I can't drink this kind of good stuff."

Li Qingshan looked face down at the golden liquid inside the cup. He realized that he would seem too petty if he still refused at this moment. So he lifted his head and drained the wine from the cup in one gulp.

"Hey!" Hua Chengzan was already too late to stop him, while Wang Pushi had never looked straight into Li Qingshan's eyes from beginning to end. He had merely been conjecturing as to why Gu Yanying had made him come, and even let him drink this precious Bodhi wine.

Gu Yanying had absolute no interest in stopping him. She merely smiled lightly with the expression of watching a good play.

Li Qingshan had no time at all to distinguish the savors inside the drink. A ball of scorching spiritual energy cracked open inside his stomach, crashing sideways and bashing straight on all over his four limbs and hundred bones. His own true qi was entirely unable to play any hindering role in the slightest.

Not good. The spiritual energy contained within this drink was even above his imagination. The liquor's aura and spiritual light that had radiated outward turned out to be merely from the most

superficial layer.

Feng Zhang was very happy inside. Country hick! You could only slowly savor this Bodhi wine. If you drank it down too abruptly, the powerful spiritual strength would damage the dantian and the meridians, just like a flood wrecking the river's dikes.

But Li Qingshan's body didn't explode and die, because he'd never cultivated what dantian or meridian to begin with. Spiritual light glowed all over his body as he strove to mobilize his own true qi in order to gobble and transform the spiritual energy. Moreover, his body was also absorbing the spiritual energy like a sponge, gradually suppressing the riot it caused.

Gu Yanying stared at Li Qingshan, her eyes like a falcon's. An ancient copper coin vibrated at high frequency on the fingertips of her left hand, coagulating in the wake of her vision. Li Qingshan felt a terrifying sensation, as if his own mind and soul had entirely been laid bare.

Li Qingshan completely digested the spiritual energy inside his body after a moment. Gu Yanying's vision dispersed thereupon, and she slanted her head to the side, seeming to ponder about something.

Hua Chengzan sighed in relief. It looked like body tempering wasn't entirely useless after all.

Wang Pushi was a little curious. What degree of power did the spiritual qi contained inside the Bodhi brew possess? It wouldn't

be strange even if it allowed someone to directly promote to the third level of qi refining, but there wasn't any shred of indication Li Qingshan was about to break through. He still stayed at the first level of qi refining, with merely a great strengthening of his true qi.

If he hadn't also drunken a cup, he would have had suspicions whether this Bodhi brew was fake, or whether its age was insufficient.

Li Qingshan sighed in relief. He cupped his hands in greeting toward the three of Gu Yanying's and said: "Many thanks!" He hadn't expected he wouldn't lose the spirit ginseng, and would even get a cup of wine to drink instead. But he still somehow felt some nagging unhappiness in his heart.

"How about it, now you still feel I came to snatch your spirit ginseng? Little brother Qingshan?" Gu Yanying poked at his sore spot, her face carrying a trace of joking amusement. Li Qingshan was very young but he had a face full of a solemn appearance. It was truly very interesting.

Li Qingshan straightened his back and said: "I'm only a mountain village kid, there's no helping my ignorance and lack of experience. But what I don't understand is, since the great figures of the Eagle Wolf Guard are so outstanding, why did you allow the Black Wind Camp to cause misfortune for so many years, why did no one sort it through?" There was a faint flavor of interrogation, interrogating them on why they held a sinecure, why they occupied their positions but didn't think about the duties that came with said positions.

Chapter 80: Frog At The Bottom Of The Well

Wang Pushi's expression presently became a little unbecoming. Suncheer was inside the range of his jurisdiction, but how would he know what kind of thing the Black Wind Camp was.

Hua Chengzan thought for a little: "It seems this place is on our list of names, but it's just ranked too low so we couldn't spare any time dealing with them for all these years."

A very long time later, Li Qingshan would come to learn that every Eagle Wolf Guard office from top to bottom had a list of names ranked by strength, the degree of evildoing, the magnitude of their disturbance, and the amount of benefits. The Eagle Wolf Guard would send masters to kill them one by one starting from the top. This was a blacklist that made men of the martial world terror-stricken as soon as they heard of it. If you could be ranked high enough on the blacklist, it was proof you were strong enough and rampant enough, but it also entailed you weren't far from death. However, because a variety of figures emerged one after another like flies, the Black Wind Camp more or less belonged to the sort that would never have their name come up.

Wang Pushi said with a quiet shout, "You talk too much!"

Feng Zhang saw that Li Qingshan had gotten on captain Wang's bad side and saw his opportunity come. He said with rising courage, "Captains, this kid stole the spirit ginseng, indiscriminately killed innocents, damaged my Eagle Wolf Guard's authority..."

“You’re trying to fool me?” Gu Yanying interrupted him. It wasn’t a question but rather amazement, as if Feng Zhang had done something very difficult to believe.

“No, I’m not...” Feng Zhang wanted to quibble, but Wang Pushi’s vision fell on him with an ashen expression, and it was as if his neck had suddenly been choked. He was unable to say out one more word.

“Although us Eagle Wolf guards aren’t any sort of good and honest folks, we still haven’t degenerated so low to be ordered about by men of the rivers and lakes, or fabricate these falsehoods with neither head nor tail.” Gu Yanying shook her head and didn’t pay any further attention to Feng Zhang. She said to Wang Pushi instead, “Old Wang, did you bring the map?”

Feng Zhang’s expression looked simply as if someone had struck him with a sword. His face was pallid without any shred of blood on it, and his body was covered by large amounts of sweat from head to toes. Anyone who’d cultivated to his level would be able to freely control their body, so it was easy to tell from his behavior how low his state of mind had fallen.

“Brought it!” Wang Pushi took out a huge map from a pouch at his hips.

Li Qingshan opened his eyes wide. A spatial pouch!

There was no telling what animal leather the thick map was made from. It unexpectedly also glowed with spiritual light when

it was unfolded on the small table. This wasn't an ordinary map.

Gu Yanying said: "You inject true qi inside and silently read the two words 'Suncheer City' in your mind."

Li Qingshan put his hand on the map and thought "Suncheer City." An extremely faint ray of light brightened on a corner of the map. His mind also naturally received many information on top of that, including Suncheer City's population, surface area, location, and so on.

Gu Yanying said, "Think again of the Clear River prefecture."

Li Qingshan's thoughts revolved. Then he saw hundreds of light dots brighten up at the same time, as resplendent as a river of stars. Every bright spot was a city, and the ray shining from Suncheer City practically belonged to the weakest batch, while the brightest spot at the very center represented the Clear River capital city.

Three hundred seventeen cities, a territory of three thousand miles from north to south and from east to west. This was precisely the Clear River prefecture.

Li Qingshan had long know this world's mountains and rivers were boundless, but he didn't expect it'd actually be big to such an extent. He'd once heard the elders in the village talk about it, but he'd merely taken them as exaggerated stories. He never thought it was unexpectedly true.

He suddenly understood in an instant why the lord prefect would casually hand over the head county magistrate title to the unlearned and incompetent Ye Dachuan. It was because a small city was fundamentally of no consequence for the whole of the Clear River prefecture. And the Black Wind Camp was even more insignificant. Unless the Black Wind Camp had directly torn the flag in revolt, it would have been very difficult otherwise to transmit the news to the Clear River capital a thousand miles away.

The imperial court of this world was not only not weak, it was frighteningly powerful instead. It was only due to the surface area being too big that it allowed local officials to act like autonomous lords. Autonomy didn't represent freedom however.

Whether the Black Wind Camp or the Horse Rein Village, no matter how much they tossed about, they'd merely be tossing around a small place. If you tossed about too fiercely, they'd directly send one or two Eagle Wolf guards and squeeze you to death. You'd never be able to rattle the foundations of the imperial rule. It was a regime that was simply firmer and more secure than any dynasty Li Qingshan knew of.

"The Ruyi region I administer has nine prefectures. Half a year ago, in Joyful Triumph prefecture, the White Lotus cult sacrificed a whole city in order to refine a magical treasure. Maybe two hundred thousand people." Gu Yanying lifted her head and drank a cup of wine. Hua Chengzan hurried to refill it for her.

Two hundred thousand people! For Li Qingshan, the Black Wind Camp's massacring villages was already a hackles raising heinous

behavior, but how could he imagine there were people a thousand times more evil.

Li Qingshan subconsciously searched for the Ruyi region on the map. He saw almost ten times more dots of light brighten up. Just looking at the map, a dot of light going out seemed to be a mere trifle.

The Ruyi Region was ten thousand miles across.

Although Li Qingshan didn't have a precise concept about geography, he was still very aware this was already much greater than the entire surface area of the China from his former world. At this moment, Gu Yanying was clearly right in front of his eyes, but also appeared to be far away beyond the furthest clouds, in a realm so distant he had no way to touch.

Just like a frog at the bottom of the well seeing the stance of the eagle in the sky. It could only have the strength to look up.

The eagle circled in the sky, searching for even greater preys. How would its vision fall inside the well and pay attention to the disputes between some insects and flies. This time it had also merely stopped beside the well by chance, and noticed an unusual frog.

Wang Pushi said very cautiously, "Captain, did you come here this time for the matter of the White Lotus cult still?"

The Holy Mother of the White Lotus cult was a Golden Core stage demonic cultivator, she was a frightful character he couldn't afford to provoke. It wouldn't be good thing if he were to be mixed inside this kind of conflict. Captain Gu had led men to encircle and annihilate the White Lotus cult five times, and although she'd seized an overwhelming victory every time, she'd still lost more than a dozen men just counting the White Wolf Guard. Meanwhile, the strength of a Red Wolf captain like him was merely equivalent to a first level White Wolf guard.

Gu Yanying smiled and said, "Why would I come alone then? The White Lotus Holy Mother is wounded, she's already gone into hiding. I've only learned a superficial knowledge of my Six Lines Divination and can't find her. Besides, a Golden Core cultivator is indeed not that easy to kill." So saying, she looked again at Li Qingshan and lamented the inadequacy of her Six Lines Divination. She couldn't clearly figure out even this person.

Since it wasn't for the White Lotus cult, then there truly weren't many people left in the Ruyi region worth her acting personally. Everyone watched her with curiosity. Gu Yanying put down the cup of wine from her hand and paused a moment, the expression of a headache floating on her face. "It's her lady concubine Serenity's cat that's gotten lost, she let me come find it."

"Find a cat!" Li Qingshan was stunned. He originally thought she'd have some very important matter, that she was going to capture what terrifying figure. He didn't think she actually hurried from thousand miles away all the way to this small Suncheer City just to find a cat.

Gu Yanying let out a sigh. “I’d rather go fight a decisive battle with the White Lotus Holy Mother.”

Wang Pushi and Hua Chengzan knew what the two words “concubine Serenity” meant. Their expression became entirely prudent, and they didn’t dare butt in or ask too much. This probably involved a conflict at the highest level of the Verdant province; it wasn’t something they could intervene in.

Gu Yanying’s mouth hadn’t stopped while talking, and one cup of wine after another went down her gullet. When she stopped talking she’d already emptied a cauldron’s worth of wine. A trace of blush floated on her face, as if the world had returned to spring. Her allure was unparalleled.

Gu Yanying stood up free and easy. “Alright, there’s no more wine, I’m done talking.” She took out a bag from a jade ring on her hand and put it on the table. “You take those spirit stones, it’s my thanks for the wine. Properly cultivate and hurry to break through!”

Chapter 81: Grand Aspirations

Wang Pushi looked at this bag of spirit stones. “Captain, this... this is too precious.” His Bodhi brew didn’t even have one-tenth of its value. Gu Yanying had clearly summoned him in order to give him these spirit stones. His heart was filled with gratitude he couldn’t express with words.

Gu Yanying said, “I let you take it, so take it. It’s not like I’m lacking this little spirit stones!” Then she told Hua Chengzan, “Little Hua, what you’re missing right now isn’t spirit stone. Don’t only tell other people to use the time they spend on bullying kids on training instead. You also go easy on sowing your wild oats around and spend more time on cultivation. Out of my eighteen subordinate captains, you’re the only one with a cultivation still at the qi refining stage. You have to know that you’ll end up as a mortal if you can’t pass through a heavenly tribulation and establish your dao’s foundation.”

Li Qingshan thought that it was no wonder Gu Yanying had known Feng Zhang was lying. Sitting here, she’d actually clearly heard their dialogues inside the city. For an ordinary person, this would truly be a figure that resembled a god.

Hua Chengzan said smilingly: “Yes, boss Gu, I’ll certainly cultivate even if I have to risk my life and limbs.”

Gu Yanying said to Li Qingshan last, “Little brother Qingshan, I’ll give you this map. I’ll also gift you with a few words, ‘Thirty thousand miles across the Verdant province, a mere corner of the rivers and lakes.’”

Her words done, she went away through the air, her wide sleeves like an eagle spreading its wings in the wind.

That figure with white clothes brighter than snow had already vanished beyond the horizon before Li Qingshan could return to his senses.

It turned out you could really fly!

His mouth repeated the words Gu Yanying had left behind. He clearly understood in his heart there would be no more opportunity to meet in this life if he still stayed inside Suncheer City.

In this winter season, Feng Zhang was soaked from head to toes with sweat as if he'd been just fished out from the water. It looked he'd gotten away from a great catastrophe at this moment. He took a deep breath in.

Wang Pushi's expression recovered its grimness as he immediately emitted the intense pressure of his power.

It was as if Li Qingshan suddenly discovered that this person in front of him was also an extraordinarily fearsome figure. He'd seemed ordinary like an uncle next door under Gu Yanying's radiance that was similar to that of the stars and the moon, but as soon as Gu Yanying left, that dreadful momentum that resembled a wildfire pressed down as if it hid the sky and covered the land.

Li Qingshan instinctively felt dread and danger, as if there was an ax above his head, about to drop down the next moment. He gritted his teeth and clenched his fists. He didn't move a single bit no matter how the aura oppressed him. The iron bones in his entire body seemed to grind with metal clangs under the gigantic pressure.

Feng Zhang knelt on the ground with a “putong.”

Wang Pushi turned his head away. He simply had no desire to look one more time at this disgraceful appearance of Feng Zhang's. Compared to Li Qingshan, the distance was as far as between the heavens and the earth.

“Leave your wolf badge behind, get lost!”

He'd have punished Feng Zhang at most if he'd come in advance and met with the same kind of situation. But he could really not lose this face in front of Gu Yanying. The rage in his heart really reached the utter limit. This dog was actually unable to know what was good for him and dared to speak deceitful words.

Gu Yanying hadn't said anything directly, she hadn't seemed angry either, but she'd decided Feng Zhang's fate with a few casual words.

“Captain!” Feng Zhang shouted in grief, as if struck by lightning.

There was a kind of feeling like “[When birds are about to die, their cries are mournful](#)” when the voice fell in Li Qingshan’s ear. He thought: he’s just making you resign, why do you look like your parents just died, that’s not the behavior of a man.

quote from the Analects of Confucius.

How could he understand the meaning it had for Feng Zhang. He understood even less the difficulty of joining the Eagle Wolf Guard. Various techniques hard to spot in the martial world could be casually consulted inside the Eagle Wolf Guard’s library pavilion. Even people stronger than him would be courteous to him wherever he went. His entire family clan had gained glory thanks to this status of his. Once deprived of this status, he would merely be what men of the martial world called an “innate master.”

Wang Pushi was famous for having a heart of iron and stone however. Words he spoke were certainly impossible to change. Feng Zhang put his wolf badge on the table with a feeling of disaster that maybe even his life might be in danger. He turned his head back threw a look at Li Qingshan.

His eyes were filled with a venomous expression that said he wanted to peel his skin and sleep on it, cut his flesh and eat it. This kind of look would be enough to make an ordinary person feel ill at ease for several months. But what kind of person was Li Qingshan; he glared back with no fear and no qualms. The firmness of his will could already not be compared to how it used to be after going through so many things.

Feng Zhang was the first one to move his eyes away. He moved his feet and left in a flurry.

Wang Pushi said, “Collect it!”

Li Qingshan went forward and gathered that Verdant province map like a cherished possession. He couldn't use this item to cultivate or kill his enemies, but it broadened the manly emotions in his chest. It let him know how vast the world was, how tiny his own existence.

But no matter how tiny his existence, there would certainly come a day he would prove a frog wouldn't stay a frog forever. He would definitely leap out of this deep well, stretch his two wings and fly to the highest skies, to chase that silhouette too distant to reach.

This experience not only hadn't broken his confidence, it strengthened his ambition instead, made his heart grander, set down an even loftier goal for him.

Hua Chengzan smiled to the side without breathing a word. There were only the three words “ignorance is fearlessness” in his heart. There will certainly be a day when you understand just how far the distance between you and her is, so far that no amount of fortuitous adventure, innate talent, or painstaking efforts can make up for it. You won't be able to go one step nearer no matter how you chase her.

“There's also this.” Wang Pushi threw a look at the wolf badge.

Li Qingshan froze blankly a moment. He took up the wolf badge. A gust of cool air penetrated inside his palm, and he felt a

pleasurable comfort all over his body.

This item was forged from dark icy iron. It was able to calm the mind, and allowed the wearer to train with half the effort for twice the effect, also helping them to prevent any deviation from the rightful path of their cultivation. Other than that, it also had many wonderful secondary functions.

Li Qingshan didn't know about this, but he still knew this item was very extraordinary. Everything had changed so fast however, it couldn't help but make someone stand confused between laughter and tears. An hour hadn't even gone by that he'd already become one of those Eagle Wolf guard those men of the rivers and lakes were incomparably afraid of. This was also merely due to Gu Yanying's attitude.

Wang Pushi collected the table, furnace, and small cauldron, putting them back inside the pouch at his hips before standing up. "You're not an Eagle Wolf guard yet, go report at Zhuo Zhibo's place in Blessed Peace!" He took out an iron ruler and tossed it in the air. The iron ruler swelled in the wind, turning ten feet long as it floated in the sky. Wang Pushi trod on it in one step.

Hua Chengzan patted Li Qingshan's shoulder and gave him an expression of "you're on your own now." He told him three words: "Run for it!"

The iron ruler broke through the air as it went away, dragging a beam of spiritual light behind.

“Hey, old Wang, wait for me!” Hua Chengzan stamped into the empty air and crossed a distance of several hundred feet in one stride, stepping on the ruler. He also disappeared in the blink of an eye into the night’s sky.

Li Qingshan had no time to marvel at those immortal means. He felt a violent burst of killing aura assault him. He recognized Feng Zhang’s twisted face at first glance as the latter charged his way like a mad dog. He decided to listen to Hua Chengzan’s suggestion for now instead of facing Feng Zhang’s frenzy head on. He used the “Tiger Demon Mountain Climb” body technique and leaped up the mountain.

A wind blade slipped through where he’d stood as soon as he jumped up. The upper half of the tall pine slowly slid down and fell on the ground with a rumble.

Li Qingshan saw this scene when he turned his head back. He was shocked inside. This was probably not only Feng Zhang’s power, but also the effect from the wind-stitching blade. The Eagle Wolf Guard’s welfare program was indeed pretty good, that wasn’t something those second or first grade masters’ miscellaneous spiritual weapons could compare to.

According to the green bull, those were simply weapons with strengthened firmness and sharpness. They could fundamentally not count as genuine spiritual devices. Every spiritual device would have a special effect. This wind-stitching blade that could send out wind blades could at least amount to a low rank spiritual weapon.

Chapter 82: Mountain Temple In The Snowstorm (1)

Li Qingshan grabbed the [Cursive Sword Script] on his back. His true qi had not only recovered to fullness after drinking the Bodhi brew, it even reached the highest apex it'd ever reached. It was fully sufficient to operate this spiritual weapon once more, and it was certain to be much fiercer than the wind-stitching blade.

But he had no absolute confidence he could do Feng Zhang in in one killing strike. This spiritual device of his was probably more than a rank higher compared the wind-stitching blade, it was a genuine treasure. If he couldn't kill the enemy and the rumors spread out with the wind, then those it would attract wouldn't only be first-grade masters but innate masters. Or maybe he should say qi refining masters.

On top of that, he couldn't yet manipulate this spiritual device very well. It would suck in the entirety of the true qi from his body once stirred. If it failed, then his stamina or speed or strength would all decline by more than a level. He'd only be able to sit still and wait for death.

Heavy dark clouds once again covered the sky. There were two men in the pitch-black curtain of the night, one chasing and one fleeing. Li Qingshan kept leaping among the mountains thanks to his extraordinary vision, focusing his search on rugged spots that were hard to pass. He climbed cliffs and jumped across mountain streams, the scenery constantly flying backward.

Feng Zhang madly chased behind with bloodshot eyes. It seemed

he was also able to see through the night, but his vision was still far from matching Li Qingshan's eyes that had been dripped with the green bull's tears.

Perhaps he would have been able to catch up if they were on flat land. But in the mountains, the effects of Li Qingshan's three tiger demon body techniques simply stacked on top of each other. He was unbelievably fast. The lay of the mountains also undulated up and down, and after several twists and turns around mountain peaks, he could no longer find Li Qingshan's whereabouts.

Li Qingshan pulled away just like a hunting tiger. He concealed himself in a snow pit within the shades of the mountain rocks, his hands squeezing the [Cursive Sword Script]. He even called out Little An. As long as Feng Zhang caught up, then it was in for a penny, in for a pound. He would act with his entire strength, and even if he couldn't kill him he would give him some injuries. This place was already deep inside the mountains and it gave him enough room for maneuver. He would be able to chase Feng Zhang all the way until he killed him. His plan couldn't be said to be shallow.

A long whistle sounded up. Feng Zhang's venomous voice reverberated among the mountains: "Li Qingshan, I'll definitely peel off your skin and mince you into ten thousand slices, I won't rest until you die!" It shook the snow cover on the mountain top into sliding down pell-mell.

Li Qingshan realized he wouldn't be catching up for now. He sighed in regret. As to those threats, he would naturally not take them to heart. He stayed in ambush for another while, making

sure that Feng Zhang indeed wasn't catching up. Only then did he drill out of the snow pit. He shook off the snow from his body then walked toward the depths of the Boundless Mountains.

He'd finally discovered after obtaining the map that what those hundred thousand great mountains he'd gazed at from afar for a dozen years were called "Boundless Mountains."

No borders and no limits because they were boundless. A broad-minded heart and chest, because they were boundless.

A good name!

He ascended a tall peak and once again gazed at the ranges of mountains from afar. There was no more confusion in his heart. He saw buildings in the distance. He hurried there to have a look and only found out then it wasn't a village, but a dilapidated mountain temple. Apart from the front hall, the surrounding walls and buildings were all half-collapsed. But it still was shelter from the wind in any case.

He didn't fear the cold, but it was still extremely taxing on his stamina and true qi to stand amidst these patches of frozen skies and snowy lands.

He found a bear's lair with Little An's help. That wild bear was still in the middle of hibernation. It couldn't even wake up before Li Qingshan killed it with an explosive punch and carried it back to the mountain temple.

Because they cultivated different supernatural skills, Little An's five senses weren't as keen as Li Qingshan's but he seemed to have an extreme sensitivity toward the vitality of the living. Even Li Qingshan hadn't discovered the bear's lair under the snow cover at first.

The great hall was a great patch of emptiness. There wasn't even an offering table or an inscription wall board. Those had probably been taken away by nearby villagers to use as firewood. But Li Qingshan saw a ten feet tall awe-inspiring mountain deity with a ferocious-looking face actually carved out from solid wood. It stood intact on the divine table, with only vestiges from the erosion of the years gone by on its body. Those villagers probably didn't dare to be excessive in their blasphemy.

Li Qingshan didn't have the same considerations however. Now he was already hanging out with monsters. Little An and himself were both cultivating supernatural skills from the ways of monsters and demons, so he had no need to venerate any damned god. He went up and crushed the deity's figure into pieces with kicks and punches. He built a fire inside the great hall, then skinned a great bear and tore its bones. He had no need for any cutting tool. He would merely scratch lightly with his fingers, and the thick bear fur and bear meat were slit apart like paper.

The bear's heart became Little An's dinner, the bear skin was spread on the ground like a rug, and the bear meat was hooked over the fire.

Speak of the devil and the devil will show its horns. Li Qingshan was just reminiscing about the green bull for a little bit that it

appeared in front of Li Qingshan, very unable to endure reminiscence.

Li Qingshan slandered him groundlessly inside. It was simply like those policemen in the movies, it always only showed itself when whatever it was had already ended.

The green bull threw a glance at the god's figure inside the blazing fire. It nodded as if very satisfied, and asked, "How did you feel today?"

Li Qingshan said, "I felt like I don't understand anything and made a joke of myself for no reason. You still don't explain things clearly. Even if I truly cultivated the Strength of Nine Bulls and Two Tigers to completion, would I really be able to beat them? Those qi refining golden cores, what's it all about?"

The green bull said, "Isn't your present understanding much deeper than what I've explained to you? Whether this supernatural skill of mine is useful or not, you'll understand very quickly. As to those qi refining or golden cores, those are human cultivation levels."

Li Qingshan said, "Am I not human?"

The green bull laughed and said nothing. It made Li Qingshan feel a burst of evil chilliness. He grabbed the bear meat and ate it with big mouthfuls and big chews. A lot of it was still half-raw and half-cooked, still carrying traces of blood, but it unexpectedly didn't feel unpleasant to him. It felt like another kind of flavor

instead. A great bear was gnawed clean in not long of a time.

He also felt that he was a little unlike a human. But there wasn't anything bad about being able to eat and drink different things in any case. Afterwards he practiced some after-dinner exercises. He stood up and trained his skills. He found out there was only a small gap left until his [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] could reach the first layer realm after he drank the Bodhi brew, but it still wasn't enough to break through.

He questioned the green bull about the reason why, and the outcome indeed wasn't outside of his expectations. The [Bull Demon Strong Fist] was steady and required painstaking training, while the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] required one to progress amidst slaughter.

Slaughter! Li Qingshan lowered his head in deep thoughts.

A dot of light could spread to places very far away inside the pitch darkness of the range of mountains. Li Qingshan lay on the bear fur, his hand holding the [Cursive Sword Script], and told Little An to hide. He quietly waited for his prey to take the bait.

He suddenly opened his eyes when heard the sound of footsteps. He trod outside the mountain temple. What he saw wasn't Feng Zhang alone. There were five other persons beside him. Hall master Wu, Wei Dandong, Chu Xin, Lu Tingrui, and Wan Hao, the five first-class masters stealthily surrounded the mountain temple, sealing Li Qingshan's escape.

There were other countless figures coming and going, all of them their sect members and disciples. There was no lack of second-grade masters among them, and even the weakest ones were third-grade masters.

Li Qingshan didn't think that his bait for Feng Zhang would actually attract so many people over. It seemed that even if Feng Zhang's heart was inhabited by extreme anger, he still wasn't an idiot and knew to borrow strength from others.

Feng Zhang's face exposed an ecstatic expression when he saw Li Qingshan, but his anger burst out as if he were mad when he saw the wolf badge at Li Qingshan's hips. It was precisely this man who'd taken everything away from him. Li Qingshan spoke before he had time to say anything: "I don't know the nicknames of your four, but you're still figures with status and reputation. You've just been scolded into scrambling the hell away, and now he's now ordering you about in the blink of an eye, don't you feel ashamed?"

Chapter 83: Mountain Temple In The Snowstorm (2)

Wan Hao and Wei Dandong both looked a little uncomfortable. Chu Xin said with a chuckle: “What’s shameful or not shameful about doing business.” He fiddled with the iron abacus in his hands, producing crashing sounds.

Lu Tingrui pulled out a thin sword sparkling with spiritual light and said, “Take out the spirit ginseng and we’ll leave at once!”

Feng Zhang had promised each of them would have their equal share of the spirit ginseng when he’d made them come. Hall master Wu wasn’t very satisfied with this result, but how could he say any nonsense after seeing Feng Zhang’s ashen face.

Li Qingshan didn’t say a word. He fished out the spirit ginseng from the gourd, threw it inside his mouth, chewed it to pieces and swallowed it down. He patted his hands: “No more!”

The masters’ eyes had brightened up but then immediately dimmed down in a heartbeat. They showed different expressions on their faces, perhaps despair, perhaps wrath, perhaps disappointment, but they indeed lost the desire to act.

Li Qingshan’s move of pulling the rug from under their feet was truly sharp and resolute.

Feng Zhang said, “I have spirit pills even more useful than the

spirit ginseng. They will definitely accomplish your desires as long as you act, but whoever doesn't act will be this Feng Zhang's mortal enemy starting today. I'll take my revenge on your families and sect members one by one."

The expressions on the several masters' faces all changed greatly. Li Qingshan laughed coldly and said, "Are you just going to believe those words that threaten your families at the slightest pretext? Better we band together and destroy him, see if there are spiritual pills on him. We'll just split them. Now he's not an Eagle Wolf guard anymore in any case, no need to worry about retaliation."

The several masters were all tempted. Feng Zhang drew out his wind-stitching blade with a whoosh. "Who dares!" He saw his blind threat of strength had caused the opposite result than intended and added, "The spirit pills aren't on my person anyway."

Li Qingshan might truly have succeeded in inciting their desertion if his strength were a little higher, but the masters could obviously distinguish who was easier to kill out of the two, so they made their decision.

Li Qingshan thought as he saw the crowd press forward step by step, [after splashing blood on Suncheer House like Wu Song, was he going to be taking shelter from the snowstorm in the mountain temple like Lin Chong?](#)

This is the same Water Margin reference that cropped earlier in the story already. Blood slashing refers to Wu Song taking revenge on those who plotted against him and splashing their blood on Mandarin Ducks Tower, while taking refuge from the snowstorm

in the temple refers to Lin Chong charging out after hearing people talking about their plot to kill him, and then killing them.

No one could know whether the heavens had followed mortal will, but snowflakes truly floated down from the sky once more.

He didn't plan on escaping! This battle would be very difficult, but it was precisely an opportunity to make a breakthrough in the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist]. There wasn't only wealth to be found amidst danger, divine skills and martial abilities were also to be found amidst danger. There were only masters forged from battles, there was no master forged from escapes.

“Great Sanction Wind Blade!” Feng Zhang lifted his wind-stitching blade high and attacked at the same time.

Li Qingshan widened the stance of his legs and spread his arms open as he sent a long hiss at the sky. It wasn't a human voice, but the roar of a fierce tiger. “Awoo!”

The entire spirit ginseng started to produce its effects in his belly. The true qi madly bubbled forth like a tide as it poured into the hiss. He was using a move from the [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] he'd never genuinely used previously.

Tiger Demon Wild Hiss!

All the falling snow was swept away until there was only emptiness left within three hundred feet. From high above, one

could have seen a half-sphere rise from the ground.

Feng Zhang bore the blunt of it, and the Great Sanction Wind Blade was immediately scattered off. The five great masters stopped their steps and retreated back all at the same time. They felt as if there was an iron hammer knocking on their brain.

They looked at Li Qingshan with disbelief, intimidated by the violent energy covering his entire body. Was he truly a mere first-grade master?

The rest of the second or third-grade masters were even less able to endure. They clutched their ears and rolled on the ground, two threads of blood flowing out as their eardrums were directly shattered. A few of them whose martial arts were among the weakest even directly died on the spot from the roar.

The tiger hisses in the mountain forest, and the packs of beasts withdraw. Li Qingshan faced a hundred enemies by himself, but he stood upwind instead.

The sound of the hiss extended uninterrupted forever in the distance, shaking even the mountain temple into a slight tremble. No more snowflake was able to fall down.

Feng Zhang pushed back against the hiss as he roared loudly, "What are you still waiting for?" The blade rotated in his hand and once again fired out a wind blade.

Li Qingshan stopped the hiss. He didn't retreat nor did he dodge. He mobilized his true qi and moved it toward his palm. His five fingers spit out tip-shaped qi resembling a tiger's claws as he ruthlessly grabbed the wind blade.

The wind blade broke and set off a wild gale. Li Qingshan threw a glance at his palm. A faint bloody trace was left behind. He stuck out his tongue and licked it, exposing a sinister smile. He bent his body like a bow, looking very much like a fierce humanoid tiger.

Killing intent blazed wildly. Demonic nature surged forth.

The five great masters' killing moves all landed at the same time.

Wei Dandong's longsword, Lu Tingrui's thin sword, Wan Hao's steel blade, hall master Wu's iron fist, every weapon overflowed with spiritual light. Even hall master Wu was wearing a spiritual fist glove. Front back left and right, they sealed off every path of retreat from Li Qingshan.

Eighteen abacus beads shot forth fiercely like crossbow bolts, thoroughly severing Li Qingshan's final lifeline. Chu Xin was no longer smiling.

Five great masters banded up and dealt a certain-kill blow. They didn't even need Feng Zhang to act.

Li Qingshan simply disregarded anything else. He moved one step forward and clawed toward Wei Dandong's shoulder, fighting

a life for a life.

The hiss of the claws pierced the ears before the claws even landed. Wei Dandong cherished his life so much, how would he be willing to be buried here. He immediately withdrew his sword and retreated backward.

But Li Qingshan inched even closer even after his retreat, causing Wei Dandong to lose all his guts. The sword in his hand danced and created an air-tight barrier as he merely sought a short delay to let the others kill Li Qingshan.

A spiritual sword broke through the air and assaulted forth. Little An who'd been hiding so far finally showed himself. He saw Li Qingshan in a deeply perilous situation so he used his strongest sword aura as soon as he acted, shrouding the three persons inside.

A blade cut off the sword aura against all expectations. Feng Zhang brandished the wind-stitching blade and blocked Little An.

The blood flames burned violently in Little An's eyes. He stared on helplessly as a blade and a sword fell on Li Qingshan's body. Blood splashed in blooms. He wished nothing better than to tear Feng Zhang to pieces in his heart.

Wan Hao's long blade hacked on Li Qingshan's shoulder, and Lu Tingrui's thin sword pierced into Li Qingshan's body. They'd been scared by Little An's appearance, but all of them were still first-grade masters. Their resolutions were incomparably firm and they weren't perturbed in the least.

Li Qingshan had long mobilized the true qi in his entire body already. The two treasured spiritual weapons that nothing could stop were unexpectedly unable to run Li Qingshan through or cut him off. But he was also immediately injured, even if his skin were made of copper and his bones of iron. He paid absolutely no attention to that however and went forward invariably, as if he'd bitten into Wei Dandong and wouldn't let go of him.

Eighteen iron abacus beads landed on his body. Li Qingshan's stature merely stiffened a brief moment, not disturbed in the least. Chu Xin widened his eyes round in disbelief.

Hall master Wu was the most cautious of them all. He attacked Li Qingshan from the back. He saw him wide open and was delighted inside. He sent a punch with all his strength, bombing it in the middle of his back.

Li Qingshan thought many thanks. The one I'm least afraid of here is you. He borrowed the strength from the blow and charged forward, his arms rising explosively and clasp down in one move, capturing Wei Dandong's shoulders. He focused his strength left and right, tearing while roaring in a low voice, "Tiger Demon Sheep Tear!"

Wei Dandong hadn't even used his unique abilities or his many secret skills that he'd already been torn apart into two halves, his blood and viscera splashing on the ground. One truly didn't fear a tiger-like opponent, one only feared pig-like teammates.

Li Qingshan had forcibly struck one master dead while facing a pincer attack from five great masters. It was truly incomparably violent, making everyone terrified.

Li Qingshan grabbed the two incomplete corpse parts and flung them toward Wang Hao and Lu Tingrui. The two of them were afraid of being injured by Li Qingshan's counterattack as the latter stood at death's door. They didn't want to follow in Wei Dandong's steps on his last journey, so they immediately withdrew backward.

Martial abilities were only one part of a confrontation between masters. The most important thing was their momentum.

As soon as his enemies' momentum weakened, Li Qingshan's momentum burst out in turn like the great Yangtze river bursting through its dikes. It couldn't be reined in once it exploded out. He completely ignored those few people behind his back and charged forward, his atmosphere like a mad tiger as he killed his way toward those second or third-grade masters.

Brandished fists, probing claws, headbutts, none of them could resist one move of his. Someone would be injured or dead every time he moved as he killed his way until corpses lay everywhere across the ground.

Chapter 84: Mountain Temple In The Snowstorm (3)

Those first-grade masters had eye sockets about to crack open. They had painstakingly nurtured those disciples and sect members. Many of them were their descendants or heirs. They charged recklessly forward.

Wan Hao hacked another fierce blade down while Li Qingshan was in the middle of his joyous and carefree killing. Li Qingshan didn't even turn his head back. He clutched a third-grade master and held him behind his back, using him as a shield.

“Puff.” Wan Hao didn't even frown as he cleaved the man in front of him in two, continuing his chop toward Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan took advantage of the momentary slow-down of the blade and used the Tiger Demon Stream Leap, pouncing on another second-grade master. There was a faint blade trace left in the middle of his back. He thought, “This old guy is really ruthless.”

“One-Armed Blade, why are you killing our men?!” Lu Tingrui stopped what she was doing. She ignored Li Qingshan and stabbed her sword toward Wan Hao. The one he'd killed was a beloved disciple of hers. He was very charming, and she'd always liked him.

Wan Hao brandished his blade and parried her thin sword: “He was already a dead man after he got caught. I merely gave him a

clean death. Woman, stop being so noisy.”

“Fighting among yourselves, do you you all want to die here?” Feng Zhang roared loudly. The light of his blade waved magnificently and forced Little An back. “What kind of monster are you?” His right hand trembled slightly. Little An not only possessed an exquisite sword art, his strength was also very heavy. He was extremely hard to deal with.

“Little An, kill!” Li Qingshan’s hands didn’t slow in the slightest while his mouth was talking. His claws brought the intense sound of the wind as he clutched toward a second-grade master’s sternum, his hand covered with fresh blood. A desperate atmosphere sprung up unbidden. That second-grade master was frightened stiff before his hand even landed, unable to manifest even half his martial prowess.

Several abacus beads shot out. Chu Xin had acted once again. He didn’t aim at Li Qingshan’s major acupuncture points however, but at vital spots like the eyes or the perineum instead.

Hall master Wu followed suit and fired another punch at the center of Li Qingshan’s back. He had been like the Liu Hong from back then, filled with disbelief when that fist earlier hadn’t shown any result. Even so, he tried again without any hesitation.

Li Qingshan abruptly stopped his steps, making those abacus beads hit empty air. His feet forcefully twisted around, like a tiger turning its head back. His body revolved back while he sent hit a fist breaking through the air: “Have you had enough yet!”

Fist and fist clashed together. A faint shattering sound came from hall master Wu's arm as he flew over a dozen feet away. A beam of sword light dropped down from the sky before he had time to stand up, dizzying his vision.

It turned out Little An had immediately understood Li Qingshan's meaning after hearing his words. He'd leaped up and soared a hundred feet high in the air. His body and sword merged into one as he flew down and stabbed toward hall master Wu.

Hall master Wu was horrified inside. He displayed the quick reactions of a first-grade master, his pair of fists waved wildly as he used a "Thousand Troops and Horses" move. Every fist landed accurately on the sword's edge.

It made a burst of crisp tinkling sounds. It was only thanks to his fist gloves also being spiritual devices that his arms weren't broken by the sword.

Little An borrowed the strength of the impact to soar back in the air. A wind blade slipped past under his body. Feng Zhang brandished the wind-stitching blade and chased after him. Little An didn't want to tangle with him any further however. He flew out like an arrow toward a group of men, thanks to his nimble figure, and started a great slaughter among those second and third-grade masters.

Hall master Wu lay on the ground and panted in big mouthfuls, having escaped a great disaster. There was a splitting pain in his

arms, especially in the right arm that had bumped fists with Li Qingshan. It felt soft like mud, its bones entirely broken to pieces. His right arm was already wasted.

Li Qingshan was just thinking of going forward and help him with another kick, but Feng Zhang had already pounced in front of him. Wan Hao and Lu Tingrui ceased their dispute and flanked him from the left and the right.

Hall master Wu took out a medicine pellet flashing with spiritual light from his bosom and swallowed it down during this moment short as a breath. He suddenly stood up once more. Not only his arms had recovered from their injuries, even his internal strength had been replenished to fullness.

Doping? I have that too!

Li Qingshan broke the porcelain bottle in his bosom and threw the “Sudden Qi Body Breaking Pellet” he’d gotten from Empty Slaughter into his mouth. Who cares what side effects it has, let’s talk about it after solving the present crisis first!

Boom! Boom Boom! Boom Boom Boom!

His heartbeats suddenly accelerated like an engine rotating at high speed. Li Qingshan’s thin body inflated in the space of an instant, turning him into a burly fellow. The true qi inside him was ten times more stimulated and broke out of his body.

The long blade and the thin sword seemed to strike into a quagmire and were both entirely blocked by the true qi guarding him. Wan Hao and Lu Tingrui were greatly shocked. This was clearly innate true qi. He wasn't a first-grade master, but an innate master.

“Great Sanction Wind Blade!”

“Break into pieces!” Li Qingshan bombarded a fist out. The iron fist condensed from true qi violently bombed on the wind blade.

Li Qingshan had bewildering strength to begin with. After he'd eaten the “Sudden Qi Body Breaking Pellet,” his strength was even more inexhaustible. He broke the wind blade to pieces with one punch. Feng Zhang flew up high. He roared anxiously in the air, “Everyone is going to die here today if you still don't resort to your trump cards!”

Wan Hao, Lu Tingrui, hall master Wu, Chu Xin, those four first-grade masters exchanged a glance between themselves. They all had life-saving trump cards, but the values of those things weren't to be outdone by a fourth of a spirit ginseng. None of them could bear to use them unless as a last resort at a critical moment of life and death. But seeing Li Qingshan's fearsome appearance, they could no longer afford to lament the loss of their valuables.

“Alas alas alas, today I'll have to do business at a loss!” Chu Xin sighed in sorrow as he took out a talisman. The movements of the three others were actually exactly the same.

Li Qingshan's eyes suddenly shrunk. He couldn't casually let them use these. But a frightful gale rushed his way from behind his back as soon as he lifted up a foot. He suddenly turned his gaze back, and saw that the second-grade master he'd almost done in in one strike had also taken out a talisman who knew when. He'd pasted it on the blade in his hand, and the blade was immediately shrouded in a layer of keen light resembling an astral wind blade. He chopped the blade down.

Li Qingshan could sense he'd be cleaved into two halves by this blade even with a skin of copper and bones of iron.

Li Qingshan had overly underestimated this second-grade master, because he wasn't holding a spiritual weapon, and ordinary weapons had entirely no way of breaking through his "Bull Demon Skin Refining." But how could he expect he still had such a move.

It was already too late to dodge. This second-grade master saw his blade about to earn him merit and avenge his sect members, and an ecstatic expression floated on his face. But a beam of blade light streaked across his neck out of nowhere; a human head was sent flying high in the sky by a geyser of fresh blood.

The corpse fell forward under its inertia, uncovering Little An's figure behind it. His white bones had already been entirely soaked red by blood. Several dozen second and third-grade masters lay dead behind him. His killing efficiency was much higher compared to Li Qingshan with a longsword in hand.

Li Qingshan said with a smile, "Many thanks!" He took that great

blade augmented by the talisman while he was at it. The two of them stood back to back, facing all their enemies.

The sky was pitch-black as ink. The night of slaughter was still underway.

Four first-grade masters took advantage of this interval and all bit the tip of their tongues, putting the talismans in their hands to use.

“Clear Wind Talisman!” Lu Tiingrui pasted her talisman on her leg. A stream of airflow twined around her legs. Her movement technique was exquisite to begin with, far superior to the Dragon Gate Sect’s Yang Anzhi. She was even more like a ghost after using the Clear Wind Talisman, floating to Li Qingshan’s side in an instant. “It should be your blessing to be able to die under so many precious talismans, and also that monster with you!”

She pierced her sword forward. Little An was about to parry with his sword, but she’d already floated to another side.

Chu Xin pasted his talisman on his arm. A layer of light enveloped both his arms. He flung off the abacus and tossed his flowery gown aside. All kinds and sorts of concealed weapons hung inside, [piercing bone nails](#), [iron caltraps](#), [golden coin darts](#) too many to counts. His hands waved and transformed into a blur. Thousand concealed weapons fired out from inside that blur, just like a storm of metal.

Google tells me those come from a video game and look just like ordinary nails

Just heavy metal money coins that serve as projectiles... Often with a square hole in the middle in China.

Chapter 85: Cursive Sword Script

“Keen Metal Talisman.” Wan Hao pasted the talisman on his blade and condensed a three feet long astral blade, cleaving his way forth. If Li Qingshan was thinking of taking a strike from him again and still survive, well, that would be impossible.

Meanwhile, hall master Wu simply pasted his talisman on his chest. His body glowed into a golden shape just like the Black Wind Camp’s Xiong Xiangwu. It was also a “Diamond Talisman,” but the color was much brighter. He charged forward straight on and violently struck with a heavy fist.

Feng Zhang merely stopped his steps and returned the wind-stitching blade to its sheathe, watching Li Qingshan as if he were watching a dead man. Don’t mention Li Qingshan, even he would certainly walk on the road to his death if he fell into such a siege.

It wouldn’t have been easy for Li Qingshan to deal with even one of them. He stamped a heavy foot down, and the ground sank down into a great pit. The shockwaves of the “Bull Demon Hoof Stamp” went through every direction. The figures of the four first-grade masters all stiffened for an instant.

But he certainly didn’t dare to use this opportunity to attack. He used all his strength and jumped into the air together with Little An instead.

Everyone looked upward, different expressions on their faces. Li Qingshan might still have had a lifeline left if he’d charged straight

on, but he was cutting off his own survival by jumping into the air. A man had nowhere to dodge and nowhere to take support from while in the air. The moment he fell down would be the moment of his death.

Just when Li Qingshan had reached the apex and was about to fall back down, he suddenly unfolded the [Cursive Sword Script]. On it lit up a leftward oblique stroke, a downward concave stroke, a horizontal stroke, a vertical stroke, and a hook stroke. Li Qingshan had already been holding the [Cursive Sword Script] secretly in his hands and poured all of his true qi inside long before being encircled by the three enemies.

His true qi had risen continuously after obtaining the Cursive Sword Script. And today he'd not only drunk the Bodhi brew, he'd also swallowed the whole spirit ginseng down. He'd even swallowed the Sudden Qi Fierce Body Pill on top of that; the true qi inside his body had reached an unprecedented degree, allowing him to bring out an unprecedented might from the spiritual device.

Feng Zhang's eyes brightened the instant the [Cursive Sword Script] opened. "Middle rank spiritual device! No, it's an upper rank spiritual device, hurry up and run!" But he wasn't alarmed, he was wild with joy instead. Even being fired from the Eagle Wolf Guard would be worth it if he could obtain it.

Li Qingshan mobilized his entire focus to try and control this upper rank spiritual device. There was no telling if his determination played a role or if all of it was fundamentally due to the spiritual device itself, but it automatically latched onto those

several hostile auras.

An oblique stroke, a concave stroke, a vertical stroke, a horizontal stroke, a hook stroke, they each separately flew toward Feng Zhang and the other four.

Those first-grade masters of the martial world had keen perception and had sensed an extremely fearful killing intent the moment Li Qingshan had unfolded the [Cursive Sword Script] without needing Feng Zhang's reminder at all. They reacted instinctively.

Wan Hao waved his blade toward the sky, defending himself by attacking. He exquisitely sealed off the direction the killing intent struck from. But any technique was useless in front of absolute power. A “vertical stroke” fell straight down and disintegrated the astral blade inch by inch, including the body of the blade. It pierced through the top of his head in an instant. He froze, and his whole person fell to the ground with a rumble.

Hall master Wu blocked with his two arms, using an “[Iron Locks Across the River](#)” move. With the Diamond Talisman protecting his body on top of that, he'd formed strongest of defenses. But against all expectations, a hook hooked his head away.

Dragon Li already used this technique back in chapter 34. Please refer back to its notes if you're interested in where this name comes from.

Two first-grade masters using their trump cards had been instantly killed in one hit, exhibiting the fearfulness of an upper

rank spiritual device.

Lu Tingrui floated away and escaped with all her might thanks to her outstanding movement techniques. Chu Xin had been standing the furthest from the beginning, and his reflexes were also the quickest. His round and plump figure instantly rolled to the side.

A concave stroke and a horizontal stroke slipped past. Two traces of blood light suddenly appeared. Two persons fell on the ground with miserable cries, leaving a foot and a hand behind, suffering heavy injuries.

As to the fiercest and brightest oblique stroke, it flew toward Feng Zhang's direction.

Feng Zhang immediately lowered his waist and separately pasted two spiritual talismans on his blade and his body in quick succession.

The wind-stitching blade released an astral blade five feet long, and a golden bell solidified around his body to protect it. If one said the Diamond Talisman could still be used to kill the enemy, then the Golden Bell Talisman was entirely made to safeguard the body.

As a second level qi refining master who also came from the Eagle Wolf Guard, he had even more valuables on him than those first-grade masters added together. But he'd deliberately held out on using them and let those first-grade masters risk their lives. It would have been best if they could all die at the same time; he wouldn't have needed to give them their promised spiritual pills

then. There was no way not to call his thoughts venomous.

He'd immediately lost all his reservations when he saw the upper rank spiritual weapon in Li Qingshan's hands however.

Spiritual light raged forth in the space of an instant, bedazzling the eyes. Even the thick snow cover in front of the mountain temple was entirely swept off clean.

The blade shattered, the bell broke, but the man didn't die.

The scene Li Qingshan was most worried of had happened. There was only a handle left out of the wind-stitching blade in Feng Zhang's hand, his clothes had been shredded into a mess, countless small fine wounds were left on him, but his face carried a proud smile as he watched Li Qingshan still in mid-air.

Li Qingshan's heart sank to the bottom of the abyss. A stern hiss broke through the air behind him.

Lu Tingrui waved a storm of metal with her one hand left, her eyes bloodshot.

Li Qingshan pushed little An away from his side and barely blocked it with his weapon. The true qi had been sucked away from his body until not a shred was left however, and the side effects from the Sudden Qi Fierce Body Pill also broke out at the same time. His entire body felt as if it was about to crack.

Little An stretched out a hand in vain, helplessly watching as he was sent flying out by the tide of metal. Countless concealed weapons instantly struck his body as he crashed through the temple's roof and fell onto the bonfire.

The bust of the mountain god rolled to one side, its face carrying an evil scorched grin with it, as if mocking Li Qingshan for overestimating himself.

Little An directly rushed toward the temple after landing. A thin sword stabbed obliquely. Lu Tingrui stood on one foot, her face full of rancor: "I'll kill you monster!"

Feng Zhang didn't chase after Li Qingshan. He took out another spiritual talisman and shot it inside the temple.

A great flame burst in the temple. It was already close to ruins to begin with and it collapsed in a flash. The light of the fire soared to the sky, visible from ten miles away.

Feng Zhang felt there were too many mysteries on Li Qingshan and feared Li Qingshan still had a killing move left. He had no desire to take any risk and directly used a talisman to patch his blade. An upper spiritual device wouldn't be destroyed in such a fire anyway. He only had to take it from Li Qingshan's ashes when the time was ripe.

The fire raged. The fire inside Little An's eye sockets blazed like blood as he crazily pounced toward Lu Tingrui, as if trying to take her down at the cost of his life.

Lu Tingrui flashed out of the way. She saw Little An charge straight toward the mountain temple, trying to snatch Li Qingshan away from within the sea of fire. She couldn't help muttering to herself, "Monster!"

Chu Xin struck once again. Hidden weapons hit his body with clinks and clangs. Little An's stature staggered then fell on the ground, but immediately climbed back up.

Feng Zhang sneered and waved his sleeves. His true qi gushed madly forth and slapped Little An, sending him flying out. Feng Zhang stood in front of the great fire like a lofty mountain, separating him from Li Qingshan.

He shouted in a low voice, "Why aren't you two idiots hurrying to kill it. Don't let it escape." But inside he was searching for a way to kill and silence them. He could definitely not let anyone become aware of the upper rank spiritual device.

Lu Tingrui and Chu Xin hesitated instead when they heard Feng Zhang's words. They didn't know whether they ought to fight or flee. They'd originally accepted Feng Zhang's transaction because they had been confident they wouldn't need to fear Feng Zhang reneging on his promises with the five of them joining together. Anyway he wasn't an Eagle Wolf guard anymore. Even if he wasn't afraid, would each and every member of his family be an innate master?

Chapter 86: Demon Awakening

But now the dead were dead and the disabled were disabled. They didn't have any ability left to face Feng Zhang and both were afraid he'd ruthlessly turn on them.

Little An didn't flee. The bones all over his body showed faint traces of cracks as he knelt on the ground and watched the sea of fire, two trails of bloody tears flowing down from his eyes sockets. He opened his mouth. No sound came from it, but everyone could feel he was crying.

Feng Zhang turned around, his face full of a gloomy smile. "In the end, I still need to act personally!"

His smile suddenly froze. A fearsome feeling came from behind his back, like a terrifying ominous beast awakening within the blaze.

A wild scream soared to the heavens.

That wasn't a sound that a human could make. Feng Zhang turned his head back. He saw a black shadow stand up from within the fire and shake off the flames off his body. It was a full ten feet tall with a pair of pointy horns that pierced the dome of the sky.

Two dots of red light suddenly lit up!

Li Qingshan had been lying inside the flames, not moving an iota.

Just as he expected from the beginning, his [Tiger Demon Bone Refining Fist] finally broke through to the first layer in this crisis of life and death!

No mighty strength gushed forth like in his imagination. He felt his body undergo an extremely strange change. Everything was being torn, altered, and remodeled. The flames gradually became not so scorching hot and difficult to endure. He still didn't dare to open his eyes.

The words the green bull once said echoed once more in his ears: "You can only be said to have genuinely learned this supernatural skill after you cultivate both sets of fist arts to the realm of the first layer."

His eyes were tightly closed, but seemed as if he could feel that small skeleton charge his way through the heavy blaze, hear the cries of his heart.

Little An!

A feeling he couldn't put into words rose from inside his heart, turning into a wild scream to the sky.

Li Qingshan stood up inside the flames. His eyes suddenly opened. The burning red light wasn't hiding in the depths of his eyes anymore but thoroughly exposed itself. He lifted a step forward, and an iron hoof stamped the mountain god's head to pieces.

The flames seemed like a lotus flower blooming to the four sides under the pressure of an invisible momentum. He walked step by step out of the sea of fire.

Everyone still left alive on the mountain peak held their breaths and widened their eyes.

A huge stature majestic as an iron tower. Pitch-black skin that seemed cast from black iron. Secretive bestial patterns extending from the head all the way to the four limbs. Two feet turned into hooves, two hands transformed into sharp claws.

A pair of bull horns so incisive it seemed they were about to pierce through the sky. Fire-red hair, or one might say mane, wildly draped loose behind as it danced blindly along with the light of the fire.

The monster aura soared to the heavens. The legend begins here.

Feng Zhang stretched his hand inside his bosom. A wild wind flitted past his body, the red hair even gliding across his face. His body stiffened, his jaws clacked together, and his body trembled.

There wasn't any more idea about resistance his mind whatsoever. There was only one thought left: "Run!" A monstrous demon, even a low level monstrous beast, wasn't something someone like him at the realm of qi refining second layer could withstand. Apart from the wind-stitching blade distributed by the Eagle Wolf Guard, there wasn't any decent spiritual weapon on him that would allow him to battle an evil monster.

Li Qingshan's goal wasn't Feng Zhang. Lu Tingrui turned around without the slightest hesitation and ran away when she saw Li Qingshan walk out of the sea of fire. The effect of the talisman was still there and her speed was indeed extremely fast.

She soared in the air. Giant claws grabbed her head from behind. Li Qingshan said, "Tell me, who's a monster!" The voice was hoarse and deep like the vibrating grind of metal, filled with a grim desire for murder.

The fierce teeth were eerie white, and the red light inside the eyes flickered without shape or form!

Lu Tingrui opened her mouth but only made involuntary gurgling sounds. She amounted to a first-grade master who could run rampant for a while inside the martial world, but when had she ever seen a genuine monstrous demon. She felt like a mouse who'd fallen in the palms of a cat, having met its natural enemy. A boundless terror weight down heavily on her. This sensation was more terrible than death.

Clink clink clang clang! Countless hidden weapons hit Li Qingshan's body, arousing a cloud of sparks. Li Qingshan turned his head around and said, "Get lost!"

The sound waves fused with the monster aura and struck like a heavy hammer. Chu Xin flew out seventy or eighty feet, his head crooked. He was dead enough that he couldn't die again.

A second-grade master lying on the ground suddenly leaped up high and pasted a talisman on his sword, attaching a layer of astral aura on the sword. It turned out he'd been playing dead all along, and now wanted to use the present opportunity to sneak on Li Qingshan from the back.

Li Qingshan was about to turn his head around when a tiger tail lashed out through the air like a steel whip, almost whipping the second-grade master into two halves across the middle. Li Qingshan looked back and watched his own tail with amazement, suddenly realizing his body had a new function. His body's reflexes had come before even his consciousness.

Li Qingshan casually squeezed. The head shattered like a watermelon. The next moment, his figure disappeared from where he stood.

One by one, he appeared beside those second or third-grade disciples still remaining and started a great slaughter. There wasn't anyone alive left on the mountain peak after a few breaths. The only one left was Feng Zhang as he crazily escaped down the mountain.

Li Qingshan slightly bent his knees. The ground fissured with a loud rumble as his person was already soaring in the air.

Feng Zhang was in the middle of running for his life when a black shadow dropped from the sky and stepped on his body with the momentum of a hundred thousand pounds.

Feng Zhang's cultivation could also be said to be extraordinary, but he unexpectedly couldn't muster the slightest ability to resist in front of Li Qingshan's absolute speed and strength. Fresh blood sprayed wildly from his mouth: "Monster, you're a monster!" His two hands gripped the ground. He couldn't match Li Qingshan's present strength, but even if Li Qingshan were to loosen his foot, his viscera and spine had already been stamped to pieces. He was only surviving thanks to his innate true qi.

Li Qingshan stooped down and said in a deep tone, "I am going to tear off your limbs one by one." The red light in his eyes was as blood. One who had human hatred and wrath like him was ten times more cruel and brutal than ordinary monsters and demons.

Little An pulled Li Qingshan's hand. Li Qingshan impetuously slapped a casual palm his way: "Get lost!"

A spark appeared in his mind when he saw Little An. Li Qingshan abruptly stopped his hand. Little An almost fell down from the blow of the wild wind he'd set off. He watched Li Qingshan with alarm, not sure what to do.

"Little An, sorry, I..." Li Qingshan clutched his head. The red light went out from between the seams of his fingers.

Little An approached once more and grabbed Li Qingshan's hand, or one might say claws.

Li Qingshan forcibly resisted all kinds of savage thoughts and killed Feng Zhang in one stamp, giving him a quick death. He

watched his own hands turned into beast claws, all kinds of hysterical thoughts pushing and shoving inside his mind. He knelt on the ground and issued a wild howl to the sky.

The curtain of the sky was pitch dark. Thick black clouds hid the stars and covered the moon.

Above the clouds' curtain however was a sea of clouds drifting up and down under the splendor of the stars and the light of the moon, boundless and endless. It was tranquil like the realm of immortals.

A white figure stood eminent and alone above the sea of clouds like an immortal removed from earthly dirt, the jade on her clothes fluttering around. Gu Yanying's head was lowered when her black eyes suddenly shrank, glowing with golden light, sharp like an eagle's as they pierced the clouds' veil to land upon Li Qingshan.

Her feeling hadn't been wrong. The breath she'd smelled on Li Qingshan's body when she'd seen him under the Huangshan pine wasn't from his lack of washing, but was a genuine monster breath. It was only because it had been too faint that she hadn't dared be certain, so she'd let Li Qingshan drink a cup of Bodhi brew to make him lose control of his true qi in an instant and make it increase greatly. Only then did she make certain of her own judgment.

Not only the monster breath appeared more distinctive, he also didn't break through to the second layer of qi refining, because the physique of monsters were different from humans and things were

different for them.

Chapter 87: Cremation Blood Fire

Facing monsters and demons, the first thing ordinary cultivators would think of would be to chop off the monsters and wipe out the demons. Gu Yanying definitely had the power to do so. Although Li Qingshan's strength and speed had substantially increased after transforming into a demon, it would still be entirely impossible for him to match up with a golden core master.

But there was no murderous intent on her face at this very moment. Her usually free and easy smile had also vanished, a faint compassion emerging instead. She seemed like a stone sculpture or a jade carving under the shine of the moonlight.

She immediately broke away from this kind of mood. She gently heaved a sigh, an easy smile appearing at once.

"Little brother Qingshan, there's only the mountain forests you'll be able to call home from today on. I fear we will have no opportunity to meet again in this life, unless you cultivate to a monster general or even a monster marshal. But by then we will probably be enemies. May favorable winds guide your path!"

She spoke softly, and even waved her hand, not caring the least that Li Qingshan had absolute no way of hearing or seeing her from the ground. Her sleeves rose up and she flew out like a white eagle. Only after she'd flown ten miles away did the wild wind she lifted plow a deep gully in the sea of clouds.

A white eagle had stopped at the edge of a well and seen what

she'd wanted to see. A peculiar frog had added an interesting experience to her life on earth.

But a frog was still a frog no matter how interesting it was. At most it could become a little stronger. There were things a hundred times more important waiting for her, a thousand times more important. If she couldn't find that wretched cat, it could very possibly lead two great sects of the Verdant province to go to war, the Hidden Sword Palace and the Dark Shade Sect. A great fire would rise in the province's prefectures' backyard by then.

But she hadn't noticed a green bull on the ground also watching her from the darkness while she was watching Li Qingshan. This was simply something unimaginable for a golden core master. How deep was her spiritual perception? She even knew some divination spells.

But if she were able to genuinely forecast the future, she would have known that the frog wouldn't stay a frog forever.

Li Qingshan howled crazily for a while before barely forcing his state of mind to restore its calm. Little An still stood at the side and did his hardest to comfort him.

He looked at Little An. Only now did he understand Little An's feelings after transforming into a skeleton, how much of a psychological blow it was for a human to transform into an alien species.

The green bull walked out from the darkness. It watched Li

Qingshan, its bull face entirely filled with smiles, its mouth clucking in wonder just like an artist looking at an artwork he was extremely satisfied with.

Li Qingshan said, “You knew long ago I would turn out like this? This is definitely not any Strength of Nine Bulls and Two Tigers right?” His present strength absolutely exceeded the strength of one bull, or one might say that the strength of one bull wasn’t referring to a bull’s strength to begin with, but to a bull demon or a bull monster.

The green bull said, “Looks like things turned out pretty good!”

Li Qingshan abruptly pounced toward the green bull, his right claws ruthlessly wiping down. His sharp claws were like curved blades, glinting with rays of light in the darkness.

The green bull didn’t dodge nor hide, its smile unchanging. Little An rushed forward and shoved Li Qingshan away.

Li Qingshan quivered from head to toes, his hands gripping the ground. “Sorry, brother bull, I don’t know what’s happening to me?” His heart seemed to be filled with explosive powders. Any anger and dissatisfaction would ignite and trigger a field of slaughter.

There were suspicions the green bull had been duping him, but he’d been aware of that since long ago. It was just like in the legends, those people who made a deal with the devil would need to pay a price at the same time they obtained their strength. It was

cruel but fair, and there shouldn't be any complaint.

Moreover, the green bull had also proved the supernatural skill it'd taught him was indeed not common stall goods. This supernatural skill had truly reached an unimaginable degree just speaking of the body tempering's results. It'd let his body reach an imaginable power in the space of a few trivial months.

The green bull said, "Your temperament isn't yet sufficient to master your demonic nature. However, I'm already very surprised you've been able to reach this step. What you said is correct. It was born from the daoist body tempering supernatural skill Strength of Nine Bulls and Two Tigers, but in reality this is already not 'Nine Bulls and Two Tigers' anymore."

"There aren't that many supernatural skills that would make a human transform into a demon! What should I do now? How can I restore my human shape?" Li Qingshan had no desire to spend a lifetime in the depths of the mountain forests.

"Very simple, you can change your shape as long as you pass through a heavenly tribulation and become a monster general, the same as the realm of foundation building for humankind."

"How long do I need!"

"If quick, a hundred years!"

"What!" The red light flashed like a storm in Li Qingshan's eyes.

“Can I live for a hundred years?”

“Don’t worry, after transforming into a demon, your lifespan will also be greatly increased!”

Li Qingshan’s teeth ground loudly together. Just as he was almost unable to resist the turbulent desire for killing inside his heart, the green bull said, “But it’s not that there aren’t other ways!”

Li Qingshan said, “What ways?”

The green bull said, “I’ll teach you another supernatural skill. Oh right, actually you still can’t be regarded as a complete demon right now.”

Li Qingshan said, “Then after cultivating this supernatural skill I’ll be able to transform into a complete demon?”

The green bull smiled and said nothing. Li Qingshan knew he could only walk forward without turning back.

The great fire was still burning. Li Qingshan and Little An’s four eyes met each others. He said, “Alright, now we’re both not human anymore, there’s only you who won’t be repulsed by me!” It was truly mutual sympathy between fellow sufferers, big brother unable to mock the second bother.

Little An desperately nodded, indicating he didn’t find Li

Qingshan repulsive at all.

Li Qingshan said, “Let’s not talk about it anymore. Let’s hurry to train!” He let Little An use all the corpses on the mountain peak to cultivate and heal his body’s injuries. Li Qingshan also searched the corpses meanwhile.

He found a bottle of spirit pills not entirely consumed on hall master Wu’s body. He raised his head and ate them down, immediately restoring his body’s wounds. He found a talisman on Sick Scholar Wei Dandong’s body. From the patterns, it seemed exactly identical to Lu Tingrui’s. It ought to be also the speed-increasing Clear Wind Talisman. Then he found another divine talisman on Chu Xin’s body like the one the latter had used. It seemed he’d indeed been wealthy.

That thin sword of Lu Tingrui’s could still be regarded as intact, its spiritual light still very bright. Little An’s sword’s spiritual light was already very dim after the battle and wasn’t suitable for use anymore. It just happened there was a ready substitute.

Finally he found a full four talisman on Feng Zhang’s body. They were all the same kind that could release a fire. There was also a bottle of healing spiritual pills that he carefully collected after he saw its spiritual light was much better than that bottle on hall master Wu.

Li Qingshan threw all the corpses into the sea of fire. He noticed the intensity of the fire wasn’t vigorous enough and tossed a Fire Talisman without any hesitation. The Fire Talisman floated from the air back to the ground. He didn’t manage to trigger it.

The green bull said, “Monster qi can’t rouse daoist talismans and spiritual devices, except if you’re able to refine them.”

Li Qingshan tried that scroll of [Cursive Sword Script] once more. It indeed didn’t show the slightest reaction to the monster qi he poured inside, unwilling to accept it. There was no need to say he did absolutely not have any refining ability at present. He could only put them away first.

Little An had restored the traces of injuries all over his body at this time, his bones restored to their whiteness. They weren’t pale white anymore however, but a little lush and green like jade. His supernatural skill had gone up yet another layer.

Seeing the fire became smaller, Little An suddenly opened his mouth and spewed out surging flames the color of blood. The blood on those carcasses seemed to become fuel for the flames, lifting a bloody blaze several dozen feet high. It even overshadowed the orange fire and thoroughly exterminated any vestige of corpses.

It was precisely a technique from the [Dao of the Beautiful Bones], the “Cremation Blood Flames.” It could draw and ignite flesh and blood. A body would die without any doubt if it came into contact with it, then turn into a corpse before scattering to ashes and dispersing like smoke. Hence it was called “Cremation.” Its fearfulness even surpassed ordinary Fire Talismans.

Chapter 88: Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets

Li Qingshan couldn't help but sigh. Now an ordinary first-grade master was definitely not his match anymore. It was truly progressing at divine speed without any bottleneck. No one could know just how strong he could become as long as he was given enough time and sacrifices.

The blood flame burned the corpses and bones until nothing was left, then spun in the air before returning back to Little An's mouth. The flames inside his eye sockets shone even brighter, as if he'd absorbed the blood vitality on all those people's corpses through the blood flame.

Li Qingshan called out and Little An leaped on his shoulders once everything was properly tidied. The two of them vanished on the mountain peak.

Li Qingshan bumped sideways and crashed head-on inside the mountain forests. The originally tall trees now all seemed to be undersized, and sometimes he just simply knocked past instead of making a detour when he met trees blocking his way, crushing the tree trunks into pieces as he forcibly opened a path through the forests.

Not only his strength and speed had changed, his five senses had also reached an unprecedented peak, and every scene inside the forest seemed to be so clear and bright. There was a different kind of touching colorfulness even inside the winter forest on a deep night.

Every sound was also so sharp. Even a wild hare's breathing under the heavy snow and mud came clearly to his ears. A living vitality filled this land between heaven and earth.

He was like a savage returned to his primitive state, feeling jubilation at everything from nature. It seemed like honey was irrigating the fields of his inner self, as if this was the proper world he belonged to, his paradise.

His heart and mind had seemingly also changed along with the changes of his body. He suddenly felt that living and breathing amidst the mountain wilderness wasn't a bad thing after all.

But then he immediately regained his soberness when he watched Little An on his shoulders. There were still many unfulfilled promises he had to fulfill. He had to help him regain a human body, he had to send him back home.

Little An also curiously watched Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan smiled faintly and silently told him thanks inside his heart.

The green bull had once again vanished from sight after passing on the supernatural skill to Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan's steps didn't stop, but he was silently comprehending the mysteries within.

The second supernatural skill's name was [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. It was diametrically opposed to the [Nine Bulls and Two Tigers], a purely qi refining supernatural skill. It also had nine layers, and he only needed to cultivate to the first layer to be able to regain human shape, or even curb and conceal the monster qi on his body so he could once again return to the human world.

It also happened that Li Qingshan could only cultivate this supernatural skill after establishing a certain foundation in his monster qi. It gave him the feeling that those supernatural skills the green bull had taught him superposed themselves layer atop another layer, closely interlinked with one another. As if every step had already been planned, and everything was for the sake of laying foundations for the future.

He didn't understand what the green bull's ultimate goal was, but in short there didn't seem to be any maliciousness. This didn't merely originate from trust, but also from his understanding of his own humble status. He probably had nothing worth eliciting the green bull's maliciousness to begin with.

Li Qingshan stopped and sat in mediation once he gained some comprehension of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. The chaotic monster qi gradually gathered together and revolved following a certain pattern. Even the uneasy and restless sea of his heart seemed to become a patch of tranquility during the cultivation process. It was much different from the frantic wildness when cultivating the Bull Demon and Tiger Demon Fist.

He suddenly came to a certain understanding. A certain

supernatural skill could influence a certain facet of his nature, and the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] was precisely made to counteract the influences of the tiger demon and the bull demon.

The spirit turtle was a divine beast from the legends. Four huge feet stamped into the sea like four pillars supporting the heavens. It seemed as if the four divine needles nailing the sea could pacify the sea waves within ten thousand miles, forbidding the great billows. The spirit turtle possessed great might, but its nature was very gentle like a senior monk sitting in meditation in extreme patience, not showing off any ostentatious display in the least.

As long as he cultivated to the first layer, he could learn the Spirit Turtle Aura Control and restrain the body's monster qi, repress the bull demon and the tiger demon, then he could once again restore a human form. The cultivation speed of this supernatural skill was the same as the spirit turtle's nature however; progress was extremely slow. After some estimation, the time needed to cultivate the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] to the first layer was measured in years. He would need to cultivate eight or ten years hidden inside the mountains at best, and two or three decades weren't impossible either if slow.

It still truly made people depressed, even if it saved quite a bit of time compared to crossing a tribulation to become a monster general. You counted time in centuries however when dealing with demon cultivation. Without several hundred years of practice, you didn't even have the face to say hello to other people. He could only prepare himself to wage a prolonged war of attrition since matters had already reach such a stage.

The sound of water cried like the rumble of thunder. Li Qingshan and Little An once again came to the place they'd previously cultivated at, in front of the great waterfall dropping several hundred feet. They prepared themselves to cultivate quietly there for a while. Since it was called [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets], there could naturally not be any lack of water.

Li Qingshan's ears twitched. Faint and distant, he heard a singing voice.

He narrowed his eyes. He could faintly discern a pretty woman's body inside the white water mist, her back facing him, seemingly in the middle of her bath.

I can also have this kind of lucky encounter with a beautiful woman?

Li Qingshan felt that things were incomparably strange as soon as this thought came to him. How loud was the sound of the waterfall? No matter how loudly an ordinary person yelled or roared, it would be drowned by the water's noise, but the singing voice unexpectedly seemed like a needle, incomparably clear as it pierced through every miscellaneous noise.

Moreover, the charge of the waterfall's flow was so gigantic that even the former him couldn't stand directly below the waterfall, but that dainty silhouette seemed to be taking an easy relaxing shower. The soft and tender stature sometimes hid and sometimes emerged within the water mist, extreme in its allure.

Li Qingshan didn't care about any see no evil. He had to take a clear look at such a strange thing in any case. It was foreordained however that he didn't have such good luck with women. As soon as he went forward a step.

The song halted abruptly. The young woman turned her vision back, revealing a pair of eyes dark green, then vanished inside the waterfall.

A great warning omen rose inside Li Qingshan's heart. He bounced forward without paying attention to anything else, but then he felt a strong gale attack from behind him. There were several traces of acute pain on his back. His skin that blades and spears couldn't penetrate had unexpectedly been sliced open by empty air. "So fast!"

His stature had just reached the middle of the air and seemed about to fly inside the waterfall when a green lily hand caught his tiger tail and forcibly pulled on it. "Come back!"

Li Qingshan's huge body was instantly pulled back. It seemed there were times an additional function could be a bad thing as well.

He couldn't help but stare blankly a while despite the firmness of his will after he'd turned his head and taken a look at who the newcomer was. The one who'd grabbed his tail with a strange power was unexpectedly a young girl clothed in jade green clothes around fourteen to fifteen years old. She had put clothes on, but from her great pair of astonishing dark green eyes, it was unmistakably the young girl who was bathing inside the waterfall

just now.

His surprise wasn't for her strength or age however. There was a pair of living cat ears on top of the young girl's head. A black cat tail swung behind her body.

That otaku soul that had been silent for so many years seemed about to break its seal and awaken once again. He probably wouldn't have become the way he was now if he'd encountered such a "thing" as soon as he'd crossed through worlds.

If one said that the feeling Gu Yanying gave him was of a fantasy-like beauty, then hers would be of a dream-like cuteness.

Li Qingshan looked at her and felt that he'd fallen in love at first sight once more. There were really a great many beautiful things in this world! But then he became alert in the blink of an eye. A monster that could change into humanoid shape would be at the monster general level at the very least. Compared to marveling at the first sight of beauty or obsessing with novelties, it was still better to first take care of his little life!

Chapter 89: Cats And Pets

The cat girl was also looking at Li Qingshan. “What kind of meowster are you? Really strange!”

Little An soared up and landed behind the cat girl, then opened his mouth and sprayed out the “Cremation Blood Flames.” The white crescent moon mark on the cat girl’s forehead shot out a beam of light and dispelled the blood flames. “You too, what kind of meowster are you?”

The cat girl added another hand as she gripped Li Qingshan’s tail and swung him in half a circle with herself as the axis, throwing him out crashing against Little An.

Li Qingshan pushed Little An along as they crashed toward the cliff. He adjusted his posture and stamped on the cliff, then landed together with Little An on the ground. The beautiful fantasy had entirely vanished as he looked at that cat girl, all his guards up.

She was very strong, at least as strong as that Red Wolf captain Wang Pushi! Thinking of Wang Pushi, he also thought back to Gu Yanying.

Could the cat she was looking for be precisely this one? How was this any sort of pet, this was clearly an extremely fearsome cat monster!

The cat girl didn’t attack again, she didn’t even seem angry at Li Qingshan’s peeping. All that flashed inside her jade green eyes was

curiosity. “You two are both really strange!”

Li Qingshan calmly said, “What’s strange?”

The cat girl said, “You have a humeownoid shape too, you should clearly have gone through a heavenly tribulation, but your strength is so meowsly! Really strange! Never heard of a skeleton who can spit out fire, really strange!” Li Qingshan had turned into a monstrous demon, his voice and physique had both gone through great changes, but the basic appearance of his body was still of a humanoid shape.

Li Qingshan shook off the dust and dirt from his body. “We are merely passing by, please continue what you were doing!” He turned around and walked away without the slightest hesitation! He was a little reluctant inside. The cute creature that originally only appeared in his imagination had showed herself in front of his eyes just like that. But he instantly killed his inner otaku’s heart thanks to his great wisdom and great perseverance. He made up his mind to stay definitely as far away from this cat as possible. This wasn’t an area he was capable of meddling in for the time being.

But he would come to realized very quickly just how fearsome was the curiosity of a cat, a cat monster to boot.

The cat girl roared, “Stand still, you still want to walk away after watching this old mother bathe?”

Li Qingshan went away instantly, went fast as the wind as he dashed out at full throttle. However he forgot the police warning

about not to running when encountering wild beasts, otherwise they would certainly chase you.

The forest trees flashed backward at flying speed, as if they'd become a blur. Li Qingshan didn't dare stop the motion of his steps in the slightest, but the sudden sound of bells rang in his ears. He turned his head and saw the cat girl follow beside him neither slow nor hurried, the bells at her waist ringing ding ding.

“Meowhahaha, you keep running?”

There was no need to run since he couldn't outrun her. Li Qingshan halted his steps with a quick brake and calmly said, “What do you want?”

The cat girl also stopped. Her jade green eyes turned in a circle, as if she were planning some mischief. She walked a lap around Li Qingshan. “You be meow pet!” She beamed extremely proudly.

“What?” Li Qingshan wondered whether he'd heard wrong or not. Could she have become tired of being a pet, so she turned it around and wanted to catch a pet herself?

“Big Black, how about this nameow?” The cat girl leaped lightly and landed on top of Li Qingshan's head. She grabbed a horn of his and rubbed Little An's head. “You'll be called Little White!” Her movements were extremely quick, only leaving a series of shadows behind. The changes in her thoughts were also quick to the extreme.

Li Qingshan said, “Don’t even think about it!” A solemn world-crosser like him becoming a pet, a pet’s pet even, that would lose face for every world-crosser under the heavens if it were to spread out.

The weight on top of his head intensified abruptly. The cat girl’s lithe stature seemed to suddenly become as heavy as Mt. Tai. Li Qingshan knelt down on one knee under the pressure and lowered his head.

“I’m not bargaining with you Big Black.” The cat girl said, “You’ll naturally get countless benefits if you agree, I won’t treat you unfairly. If you don’t agree, heehee, I don’t mind trying your taste.”

The savage nature of a demonic monster leaped out at first glance. She was definitely not as cute as she seemed on the surface.

Li Qingshan bared his teeth in a cold smile and said, “What benefits? Cat food?” But the sound of his voice hadn’t even fallen that a spirit pill flashing with spiritual light went into his mouth, transforming in the blink of an eye into a surge of spiritual qi that overflowed from his body, almost about to break its way out.

He unexpectedly had the sensation he couldn’t rein this spiritual qi inside even with his current monster body countless times stronger than before. Li Qingshan hurriedly operated the heart technique of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] to absorb and circulate this gust of spiritual qi. The slow-moving progress of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] actually sprinted forward a small segment just like this. This spirit pill’s medicinal power was

many times stronger than even the spiritual wine soaked in the spirit ginseng.

“Did you steal those from your owner?”

“What, I wouldn’t steal meow owner’s things. The owner gave all those to meow, I still have meowny of them left. How about it, are you tempted?”

Li Qingshan only understood then what was called “[wine and food are wasting behind wealthy doors](#).” He had no idea what status that concubine Serenity had that she could feed her pets with this kind of spiritual pill. It was simply extravagance to the utter limit. But he could certainly succeed very quickly in the cultivation of his [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] if he could truly have the assistance from so many spirit pills. Then he could restore a human shape and return to the human world.

Wine and food are wasting behind wealthy doors: An excerpt from a poem by Du Fu, From Chang’An To Feng Xian. The actual line is closer to something like: “Wine and food rot behind crimson doors” meaning that wealthy families (crimson doors) are very wasteful.

The combination of might with favor, of the carrot and the stick. One had to say that the effects wouldn’t be bad no matter who used it, no matter who it was used upon. The most important thing was that he had no right to choose to begin with.

Li Qingshan said, “What do you want me to do?”

The cat girl did a somersault and nimbly landed in front of Li Qingshan. “That’s better. You’re meow pet, so of course you’ll do whatever I tell you to do. Now, I want you to take meow out of the Verdant province!”

A frog at the bottom of the well like Li Qingshan who’d never left the Suncheer City area all of his life was immediately stupefied by this far-reaching ambition. “Where do you want to go?”

“Dragon province!”

“How do we go there?” Li Qingshan was a bit lost. Where was the Dragon province again?

“You don’t even know that? Follow along the Boundless Meowtains, stick north and cross meowbe a few thousand meowtains.” The cat girl lifted her gaze and looked in the far distance, the expression of her eyes suddenly becoming infinitely remote. Her tender and adorable face took on a romantic aura that only one who’d lived through great changes and traveled far away could have.

She didn’t want to be anyone’s pet anymore. She wanted to be free like the wind.

Li Qingshan unexpectedly felt thoroughly shocked. He took in a deep breath. “You’re pointing south though.”

“Shut up, this mistress knows!” The cat girl flew into a rage and

threw a flying kick his way.

Li Qingshan lifted his hands to block, but he still felt a scorching pain on his hands. He thought a while and said as he looked at the cat girl, “I can help you go to the Dragon province as long as you pay me with spirit pills.” He was worried about Gu Yanying’s pursuit, but at present he had absolutely no leeway for refusing, hence he could only search for wealth amidst danger.

“Of course I’ll feed you. That’s right, what does Little White eat?” The cat girl very conscientiously took on the role of a mistress, then she looked again at Little An with a very curious gaze, as if trying to guess what a skeleton’s diet consisted of.

Feed? Li Qingshan decided not to bicker about the wording. “Also, I’m not your servant.”

“Not a servant, you’re a pet!” The cat girl rubbed Li Qingshan’s cheeks, all smiles.

Li Qingshan’s body stiffened all over. He took in a deep breath: “In brief, this is our agreement. What are you called?”

“My name is Halfmoon. You just call me mistress!” Halfmoon crossed her arms in front of her chest that didn’t have a lot of chest and proudly introduced herself.

Little An suddenly shook from head to toes when he heard this name for some reason. The flames in his eyes flashed constantly,

billows reaching the skies rising inside his mind.

Chapter 90: Cat From The Province Capital

Li Qingshan keenly perceived his strange appearance. He asked, “Little An, what’s wrong?”

Little An only shook his head in confusion.

Li Qingshan became relieved then. “Alright, Halfmoon, now tell me why you won’t go to the Dragon province by yourself. I’ll just be a burden if you drag me along!”

“Call meow mistress! I’m being chased, I have to pull wool over their eyes.”

“You also have no sense of direction.” Of course Li Qingshan couldn’t say that. This answer wasn’t outside of his expectations. As someone who could order Gu Yanying to find her cat, Halfmoon’s mistress concubine Serenity’s influence was certainly extremely great. The manpower she’d mobilized was definitely not limited to Gu Yanying alone. But since it was about finding a pet and not catching a criminal, this task looked rather safe, and even failure wouldn’t lead him on the road toward death. Also, it was impossible this cat didn’t have some confidence since she dared to escape to begin with. It was worth a gamble in short.

Li Qingshan said straightforwardly, “No problem, Halfmoon. However I feel we still better temporarily cultivate first, and decide on a surefire plan before setting out.” He had a rather deep impression of Gu Yanying’s fearsome senses. There was no telling if she would look down from the sky at any moment, and she may

well just eradicate demons in the name of righteousness since his appearance had presently become like this.

The veins on Halfmoon's forehead bulged. "I said it's mistress!"

"Is that right, Halfmoon?"

"Meow!!!" Halfmoon's tail stood up straight as she finally erupted.

Li Qingshan grabbed Little An who was about to retaliate, and just allowed her to kick and hit him. He merely clenched his teeth without ever loosening them. He found out that her strength wasn't very great even if her speed was fast without compare. He could still endure those fists and feet.

Halfmoon vented recklessly for a while, but she didn't bear to use a heavy hand either. There were still many things she had to rely on Li Qingshan for after all. She made a cold face and said, "Follow me!" She led Li Qingshan back to the front of that great waterfall, then she pulled Li Qingshan and charged inside.

She went through the water curtains and crashed toward the mountain wall. That thick wall of rocks proved to be merely a layer of illusion right when Li Qingshan was about to collide with the mountain. They directly went through.

Inside was a completely different world, a great and wide immortal cave. It'd been dug out only recently judging by the

chiseling traces on the stone. It seemed she had been hiding there during this time.

The place the green bull had selected for Li Qingshan's cultivation was indeed a scenic spot.

Halfmoon took out a small flag from inside her little bell. Her cat bell actually turned out to be a storage bag.

Are you Doraemon? Li Qingshan stared. Spiritual light also flowed around the little flag with understated magnificence. It was clearly an exceedingly rare spiritual device.

Halfmoon inserted the flag in the doorway with a tinkle, tightly sealing the cave abode at once. Not one shred of spiritual qi or monster qi could flow out and be exposed.

Then she also took out miscellaneous items of every color from the bell. First she spread out a thick carpet weaved from some unknown animal's fur, then she set up a small table, and then she put delicate tableware on it, made from either ivory or jade.

They were clearly all creatures with the ability to see in the dark, but she still took out a lampstand. There wasn't a flame at the top of the lampstand, but a precious pearl big as a fist radiating a misty light. It shone a clear brightness inside the cave, but it was unexpectedly not the least harsh on the eye.

She finally took out an incense burner shaped like a red-crowned

crane that slowly released a strange fragrance.

None of those things didn't glow with spiritual light. The spiritual qi inside his body even sped up a little when the light of that treasure pearl shone on it, while his whole person felt refreshed when smelling the strange fragrance. Even his soul and spirit were much calmer and clearer.

None of those things could be measured with thousand or ten thousand pounds of gold. How was she a pet, she was simply a princess. Fancy that a runaway like her could actually have reached such a degree of preparation. It was truly too extravagant.

Halfmoon sat on the thick carpet and fished out a thick piece of fish meat white as snow. "Meal's ready!" She didn't even use the exquisite tableware but directly used her hands, burying her head in the food and eating in big mouthfuls.

Li Qingshan was dumbfounded as he watched. Even that fish meat glowed with spiritual light.

Halfmoon threw him a glance. She thought that she was also very willful in front of her own mistress, but the mistress would always be very tolerant. She felt that she should learn from it as one who'd already risen to the status of a mistress herself. She reservedly said, "Big Black, you can eat that!" She felt another burst of self-satisfaction inside at her magnanimous forgiving of Li Qingshan's willfulness.

Big Black? Will I ever have a decent name? This was what Li

Qingshan was thinking, but he didn't want to expose his real name either with his present appearance. Big Black it was then! He caught a piece of meat and also started to eat.

He couldn't stop anymore as soon as he started eating. This fish meat's taste was utterly delicious even though it hadn't gone through any cooking, melting in the mouth. It absolutely exceeded any delicacy he'd ever eaten. Moreover, his monster qi also slowly grew when he ate it down into his belly. It had the same effects as spiritual medicines.

He hadn't felt very full before even after swallowing a deer down, but his belly felt swollen after eating a mere piece of fish meat. "What kind of person is that lady concubine Serenity in the end, was she not good to you?"

Halfmoon first looked at him with scornful eyes, then said with an incomparably respectful expression, "There's no one in this world who treats Meownie better than lady concubine Serenity. She's beautiful noble and powerful. I couldn't even be regarded as a meowster when I first came to her side. She's the one who gave me meowny meowny spiritual pills to eat."

"And you're still running away?"

"Don't interrupt me!" Halfmoon glared at Li Qingshan in annoyance, her increasingly big eyes enough to scare people. She propped her cheeks in her palms and said, "Ah but, that person is too clingy. She has to hug me all day long. She doesn't even let go when sleeping. You tell me, could you bear that?"

Li Qingshan thought: If that concubine is really as noble and beautiful as she said, he would simply be too happy to oblige. Then he gave Halfmoon another once-over. I could accept it even with your looks.

“Whatever, you won’t understand even if I tell you. I see you have a bit of intelligence and you’re not as silly as those ordinary monster beasts, but you still can’t empathize with such deep and complex feelings. Freedom, do you understand the meaning of this word?”

Halfmoon talked as if to herself without paying attention to anything else, seemingly not waiting for any answer from Li Qingshan to begin with. Her two cat ears twitched and twitched.

Li Qingshan still ended up obtaining the information he was looking for amidst a bunch laments brimming with narcissism. In the whole of the Verdant province, the only ones with the qualifications of being called concubine were the Verdant province governor’s wives, the concubines of king Chu Lie.

The Verdant governor’s power covered those thirty thousand miles across the Verdant province. Halfmoon had run away from the province capital so she could only flee to other provinces.

Li Qingshan thought back to the Verdant province’s map. “The province capital is on the southern part. Why didn’t you head south but came north instead?”

Halfmoon said, “What do you know, the Foggy province to the south is a desolate land, do you want me to go there and starve with only the northwest wind to drink? The Dragon province, now that’s a good place, that’s where the imperial court is. There’s halls and pavilions a country bumpkin meowster like you can’t even imagine, brocade garments and jade meals.”

Li Qingshan said, “They won’t give them to you even if they have those things there.” Do you think you’re a panda and can survive in the world just by acting cute?

Halfmoon said, “What the meow do you understand. I’m going to seek shelter with the nine-tailed fox empress. She’s the leader of meowster kings everywhere, beautiful noble and strong...”

Chapter 91: Soaring Dragon Elder

Li Qingshan pursed his lips. She'd almost cheated him. What pursuit of freedom, she was clearly seeking a life of comfort without work, trying to get an even more extravagant life. He wanted to ask about the nine-tailed fox empress and the demon kings, but she'd already changed the topic back to how adorable she was to have the nine-tailed empress take a fancy to her and invite her to the Dragon province. She absolutely didn't let Li Qingshan interrupt.

She talked until she became tired. "It's late, time to sleep!" She took out a giant cat basket from the small bell with a thick of layer of swan's down laid inside. She comfortably lay down and curled in it.

Li Qingshan said, "It's still daytime right now!"

Halfmoon waved her hand and extinguished the treasure pearl. "Daytime is made for sleep, we set out at night."

Li Qingshan watched her sleeping posture. Long overlapping eyelashes, a slightly tilted jasper nose, lip petals folded close. Her curled stature seemed all the more dainty and nimble, with much less of her usual headstrong unruliness. She seemed so weak and tender that people couldn't help but give rise to a protective impulse from the bottom of their hearts.

He suddenly shook his head. Now wasn't the time to appreciate beauties. She wasn't a romantic interest who required his

protection and whom he could pursue either.

They were still in a hostile state to a certain extent. How could he be confused by her, better raise his vigilance!

Li Qingshan breathed out and exchanged a glance with Little An. He felt that today's experience was really too strange. He glanced at the young girl inside the cat basket then sat down in a corner of the cave abode in meditation, continuing his painstaking cultivation of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. Little An also sat down beside him in meditation.

Halfmoon tossed a few times inside the cat basket and said suddenly, "Big Black, sing a song for me."

Li Qingshan said categorically, "Don't know how!"

"What use are you in that case?!" Halfmoon opened her eyes.

"Better let me leave then!"

"Whatever, let meow teach you."

Li Qingshan put his hand on his forehead. He didn't have any time to speak yet that Halfmoon had already started singing, minding her own business. "Little Meowmeow, Clever Meowmeow, Go to sleep somehow..."

The graceful singing voice drifted inside the cave, but Li Qingshan pulled a face even if it was pleasant to hear. It was clearly a lullaby made to coax children. He thought that concubine Serenity was probably the type of person who raised her cats like her children. But it was indeed very pleasant to the ears when spitted out from her mouth, with a lazy and lovable flavor.

Blood fire surged in Little An's eyes when he heard, endless turbulences raging in his heart. But there was a film separating him from his memories no matter how he tried, and he couldn't understand where this feeling came from.

“Done singing, you sing!”

“I haven't learned it yet, you sing again!” Li Qingshan thought, “I'm a solemn ten feet tall male walking on a road of violence, how can I sing this kind of song?”

“It's so simple but you still can't learn?”

Li Qingshan said, “I'm a monster from the countryside, both naive and dumb. Of course I don't understand, I can't remember no matter how I try.”

Halfmoon resigned herself and sang once again, but the result was still the same and Li Qingshan still couldn't remember. Halfmoon wanted to get angry, but her thoughts waved in circle inside her mind and she said with a smile, fiddling with a spirit pill, “There are spirit pills to eat if you sing!”

“Little Meowmeow, Clever Meowmeow, Go to sleep somehow!” Li Qingshan released his voice and sang out loud. Why not sing if there were benefits, he was selling his art and not selling his body anyway. The great leader chairman Mao said that the working people were the most glorious. His voice was deep and hoarse however, like the hum of metal, and he was shouting with at the top of his lungs on top of that. The perfectly nice lullaby seemed to be a rock’n roll song when he sang it.

“Stop singing, so noisy!” Halfmoon threw the spirit pill inside Li Qingshan’s mouth.

Li Qingshan laughed mischievously and swallowed the spirit pill down, then continued to sit in meditation and cultivation. He didn’t know the spirit pill’s name, but the effects of each spill seemed to make him shed his mortal body and be reborn. The effectiveness was unimaginable. These spirit pills were probably treasures hard to obtain for ordinary people or even cultivators, but now he only had to make a few roars to obtain it. It was simply a heaven-sent opportunity.

Halfmoon had been disturbed by his noise and her sleepiness had gone away. She said with great curiosity, “What’s it about this appearance of yours? Let me guess, your mother is a tigress, your father is a bull?”

Li Qingshan didn’t answer. It sounded just like swearing to him no matter how he listened to it. But he thought again that she was an animal as well, and could only bear with it patiently.

“Or else your father is a tiger, your mother is a cow?”

Li Qingshan barely forced out an “En.”

Halfmoon said, “I was saying. No wonder you can transform when still so weak. Turns out your parents are both monsters, they shouldn’t have been weak monsters either. That’s right, where did they go?”

Li Qingshan calmly said, “Dead.” Those he thought of were his parents in this present life.

Halfmoon stayed silent a moment. “Sorry.” She stayed quiet another while. “Mine too.”

Li Qingshan watched her with surprise. Halfmoon said a “Goodnight!” and turned her back to him, no breathing a word anymore.

Li Qingshan sighed gently, suddenly singing in a soft voice, “Little Meowmeow, Clever Meowmeow, Go to sleep somehow...”

Halfmoon’s ears twitched. Little An also listened quietly. No other sound came from inside the cave in the space of a moment.

Hundred miles away, an old man dropped down from the sky and landed on the Dragon Gate mountain. He frowned as he took in the collapsed buildings all toppled over.

His gray-white hair was worn in a bun, with the wisp of a beard left behind, trimmed without a hair loose. His pair of eyes were full of understated liveliness, not letting their radiance through.

His style was unexpectedly greatly similar to the portrait of the [Soaring Dragon Swordsman](#), but it'd been a long time already since he'd last been a down and out swordsman of the martial world. Now he was the Soaring Dragon Elder of the Hidden Sword Palace instead.

The Soaring Dragon Sword is the legacy sword passed down to the leader of the Dragon Gate Sect in case you forgot. The Soaring Dragon Swordsman presumably refers to the founder of the sect.

He closed his eyes and induced his senses, his brows wrinkling tighter. Did the Peach Wood Prayer Divine Sword left behind fail to kill the incoming enemy?

The Peach Wood Prayer Divine Sword was a secret art of the [Hidden Sword Palace]. It required a peach wood sword to be worshiped by burning incense day and night. It couldn't be interrupted a single day. It would collect enormous power from thoughts and wishes as days turned into months, and its might was unstoppable once used.

Soaring Dragon Elder decided after some thoughts to temporarily leave this matter aside. The Dragon Gate Sect was but a small incense fire he'd left burning behind during his travels in the secular world. Hundred years had gone by in the wink of an eye, and he didn't take it to heart very much. Better to sort out proper business first before searching for that person and just killing him in one strike of the sword.

He was about to leave when the pupils of his eyes suddenly shrank. He fiercely looked up. A white figure dropped from the sky.

Gu Yanying said with a smile, "Soaring Dragon Elder, long time no see." There was no shred of smile inside her mind however. The Hidden Sword Palace had actually sent out a golden core elder, it was truly a little thorny. The two concubines of Verdant province, concubine Serenity and concubine Brightness, had an enmity of life and death between them. Concubine Brightness came from the Hidden Sword Sect, and she wouldn't let the other party stay at ease as long as there was any opportunity.

Soaring Dragon Elder said, "So it turns out to be famous constable Gu. Why did you come to such a remote place?" He was likewise vigilant inside. She was the most difficult one to handle out of all the White Eagle captains in the Verdant province. Moreover, she was usually very intimate with that damn woman concubine Serenity. Even her backing was tough, and he couldn't easily make an enemy out of her.

Gu Yanying said, "I was entrusted with a mission by the lady concubine Serenity and came to do a little thing. Then I unexpectedly met with Soaring Dragon Elder and thought to invite you to drink a cup." Her thoughts circled inside her mind and she made a decision. As long as she held this old man behind, she might as well allow that cat to run to the Dragon province. That cat had already caused a lot of troubles for herself during all these years, she really didn't want to see her again.

But she couldn't help heaving a heavy sigh when she considered concubine Serenity's feelings. She could only let her father negotiate with the nine-tailed fox empress in due time.

Chapter 92: All The Way North

“I don’t have this leisure. I shall take my leave, captain Gu!” Soaring Dragon Elder was about to fly away on his sword.

Gu Yanying’s stature flashed. She blocked his front, her smile already gone. “Soaring Dragon Elder, you’re already at such an advanced age, why do you insist on plotting against a cat. This cat is the only source of comfort for lady concubine Serenity after her child passed away. Does the Hidden Sword Palace truly want to wage war with the Dark Shade Sect?”

“Our Hidden Sword Palace has always followed our goal of defending righteousness by wiping out demons from generation to generation. Demons and ghosts, each and every one of them has to be put to death!”

Soaring Dragon Elder spoke resolutely. This time he precisely needed to kill that cat monster and crush that damn woman’s will. Moreover, there should be a large amount of spirit pills on that cat monster, perhaps even magic devices. It was a huge fortune he wouldn’t let go of no matter what.

He’d asked for a divination at the Heavenly Fate Elder’s place before he’d departed. The divination diagrams had shown this journey would inevitably end in victory, and he could even settle a grudge while he was at it. Hence he was confident he would almost certainly succeed.

In the end the lord governor would come out to mediate, and the

Dark Shade Sect would certainly not have the resolve to start a war with the Hidden Sword Palace. How could two human sects go to war for the sake of a cat monster.

Gu Yanying's expression immediately changed. Golden light flashed within her eyes as she said with a cold smile, "Since the Hidden Sword Palace is so outstanding, why don't you go to the Ink Sea and slaughter dragons, kill the first monster king of the Verdant province? You've always been a bunch who bully the weak and fear the strong."

Soaring Sword Elder said, "Our palace master has his own plans about this matter." Man and sword merged as one as soon as his voice fell, then they drew a long beam of rainbow that streaked through the vast sky fast as lightning.

The golden light inside Gu Yanying's eyes went out. She hesitated a moment but finally didn't do anything. She sighed gently. The sword arts of the Hidden Sword Palace pursued the pinnacle of the dao of the sword, and their killing power was already exceedingly outstanding even without borrowing from any external item. They were far from being a match ordinary golden core cultivators could rival.

She had no desire to exchange blows with him either unless as a last resort. Now she could only find that cat before he did. She could only hope her Six Lines Divination could be a little more effective, and that that Mo Yu guy could be of some help as well.

She would know with the fastest speed if any of the monsters inside the Boundless Mountains saw that cat. Then she would be

one flight ahead of Soaring Dragon Elder. There should be no problem.

Li Qingshan opened his eyes an unknown amount of time later. The cave was a patch of darkness; there was no trace of gorgeous carpets or delicate incense burners. It was entirely empty, as if none of what he'd gone through during the day had been real.

The gurgling splashes of the waterfall were so close they seemed within reach, deafening the ears. It let through moist vapor and dazzling light, but it seemed peculiarly tranquil at the same time.

He called out to Little An and walked outside the cave, passing through the screen of water hammering down from the waterfall. A bright round moon hung in the sky. Halfmoon was sitting on a great boulder and looking up at the moonlit night, her whole body bathed in a layer of moonlight. The crescent moon on her forehead was sometimes bright and sometimes dark. She suddenly turned her eyes back and smiled. "Big Black you're awake, time to head off!"

Li Qingshan blinked then nodded. Her stature suddenly appeared on top of Li Qingshan's head immediately after. Her afterimage still stayed where she originally had been, not dissipating even after a long time.

"This is?" This was definitely not something that could be done with mere speed.

"Shadow Blink you idiot!"

The voice came from the top of his head, but Li Qingshan couldn't see the reflection of her shadow when he looked at the water. "What's this now?"

"Moon Concealment you idiot!"

Li Qingshan suddenly understood. No wonder she'd run so far despite the surrounding chases and blockades. Blink and Concealment, just how many people would be able to follow closely behind her just because of those two techniques? "Can't you just conceal yourself and go north on your own?"

"I'll be found once I use monster qi. Or else why would I take you with me. Are you going or not?" Halfmoon was losing patience.

Li Qingshan leaped out of the deep waters. He chose his direction and advanced toward the north.

The Boundless Mountain Ranges were like a huge dragon spanning a territory ten thousand miles across from southwest to northeast. Deep mountains and secret forests, harsh precipices and dangerous cliffs; it was a region forbidden to man.

Li Qingshan had watched these mountain ranges for a decade, but it was still the first time he'd gone so deep inside. Dense vegetation, ancient trees stretching up filling the eye as far as it could see, treetops reaching high and tightly covering the sky. Moonlight fell down, only because it was winter and the tree leaves had withered. Everything seemed increasing more serene and

hidden.

Li Qingshan didn't walk very fast, because he feared they would be discovered if his activity became too noisy, and that would disturb their escape plans. But each of his steps easily crossed a distance of several dozen feet after the great changes of his body, so it didn't appear slow either.

Although he'd been an otaku who didn't put a foot outside in his previous world, he'd still often yearned for the life of a backpack traveler. He was finally realizing this dream in the present life, even if the way of realizing it was a little bizarre. He admired the landscapes of the deep mountains all along the way, not feeling bored at all.

He wasn't bored, but Halfmoon was bored to death. She kept muttering, "Meowving too slow, meowving too slow!" She jumped from the top of his head to his left shoulder, then leaped from his left shoulder to his right shoulder and squeezed together with Little An, fooling around with him.

Little An looked like he disliked her very much, so he also jumped here and there on Li Qingshan's body. The two of them were very light, but Li Qingshan still felt just as if there were two monkeys on his body. He was at the end of his patience after just a moment. "You both quiet the hell down!"

"You dare to talk like that to your mistress?" Halfmoon fiercely hammered Li Qingshan's head.

Li Qingshan shouted out loud and suddenly dashed crazily, charging forward with terrifying momentum.

“Silly Big Black, whatever whatever, I won’t bully you.” Halfmoon rubbed Li Qingshan’s head and laughed straight, “Hee hee.” The bronze bell-like laughter sprinkled across the forest.

Halfmoon just rummaged up and down on Li Qingshan when bored. She very soon found the [Cursive Sword Script] Li Qingshan had hidden inside his thick mane.

Li Qingshan didn’t even have the time to stop her, or maybe one could say even trying to stop her was useless. She brushed the painting scroll open, and spiritual light suddenly emerged. Halfmoon also started in fright from the sword momentum and the sword aura emitting from it. She patted her chest, then turned the [Cursive Sword Script] over and over as she observed it. She was exactly the same as Li Qingshan back then, her face also filled with an illiterate appearance. “You also have this kind of stuff! This should be a spirit device only humans can use right? I feel you’re pretty meowsterious.”

Li Qingshan said, “This is mine.”

“What’s yours is mine. Besides, who cares about this lousy toy of yours. This mistress has seen who knows how many magic treasures and devices, it’s a trivial spiritual weapon.” Halfmoon swung her hand and tossed it back to Li Qingshan. After that she played with the locust wood plaque. The plaque’s edges had already been scorched and looked very shoddy. “What’s this one for this time, there’s not even a bit of spiritual qi? The carving

craftsmanship is also so bad. South An, what does this mean?”

“When!” Li Qingshan groped around his waist; sure enough, completely empty. He hadn’t had time to say anything yet that Little An had already stretched his hand to snatch the wood plaque away. How would Halfmoon let him succeed though. She dodged him with a gentle shake. Little An refused to give up, and Halfmoon dodged several attacks from Little An in the blink of an eye.

“You weren’t so worried even for the spirit device. Tell meow what this is for and I’ll return it back to you.”

Li Qingshan blocked Little An. “This is a pledge.”

“What pledge?”

Li Qingshan wasn’t willing to tell, but he knew she would definitely not stop as long as she didn’t reach her goal when her curiosity was stirred. “I promised to accompany him back home. His home is to the south.”

Halfmoon stared. “I couldn’t tell you treat your pet also pretty good.”

“He’s not my pet!”

“I’ll give it back to you!” Halfmoon returned the wooden plaque to Little An who carefully put it away. She jumped again on his

head. Sharp claws sprang from the tip of her fingers as she started to carve on his horns.

Chapter 93: Boundless Depths

“What are you doing?” Li Qingshan’s pair of bull horns were even harder than fine steel. He felt as if the bones all over his body were vibrating when they were being carved. It felt both numb and itchy.

Halfmoon said, “Don’t move!”

So Li Qingshan moved as much as he could. He even stretched his arm and grabbed the top of his head, but she was nimble to the extreme and would absolutely not let Li Qingshan catch her. After a while: “Done!” Then she took out a bronze mirror and let Li Qingshan have a look.

Li Qingshan saw carved on his pair of horns the two words “North Moon,” one left and one right.

“I’ll paint some color on it, to meowke it look meowre striking. This way it’ll be our pledge!” Halfmoon laughed mischievously.

“You just go die!” Li Qingshan stamped with rage.

They found a natural cave to rest in when daylight neared close.

Li Qingshan stretched out his hand with a cold face. “Spirit pill!”

Halfmoon said with a smile, “Be obedient, don’t be angry. Come,

open your mouth!” She grasped the spirit pill and refused to put it in Li Qingshan’s palm.

Two pairs of eyes faced each other. Li Qingshan opened his mouth after a while and abruptly bit toward her hand. His long eerie white teeth were like blades. Don’t mention her slender wrist, even a steel frame would be bitten off.

Halfmoon immediately pulled her hand back, making Li Qingshan merely eat the spirit pill. Then she rubbed Li Qingshan’s head. “Really ferocious!”

Li Qingshan ate the spirit pill down and went to sit by himself to cultivate, continue to cultivate. Apart from cultivating, he also held the mirror and touched the two words on his bull horns. He sighed in lament. Could he still wipe them off?

He didn’t know yet at this very instant. Those two engraved words weren’t merely a pledge, they would also be a monster king’s title.

Hence three people hid by day and went out by night for several days in succession. Halfmoon would bully Li Qingshan for fun when bored. Li Qingshan put up a vigorous resistance but it was still no use, so in the end he could only let it flow by him.

Anyway, as long as he could eat spirit pills down his belly, and his cultivation could grow day by day, would he still need to fear there wouldn’t be a day when he would turn things around and be the master instead?

Moreover, Li Qingshan had obtained much knowledge pertaining to monsters from Halfmoon during these days. Monsters who couldn't cultivate a monster core were usually of low intellect, and they could only be regarded as powerful wild beasts, hence they were called monster beasts. Only those who formed an inner core could be called a monster.

Monsters were likewise separated in different levels, using the heavenly tribulations they'd gone through as the criterion, just like humans. Those who'd gone past one heavenly tribulation were called monster generals, those who went through two tribulations were called monster marshals. Only those who'd undergone three heavenly tribulations could be called monster kings, reaching the same level as the monster kings of the ten sides.

The monster kings of the ten sides occupied an area each and had countless monster marshal and monster general subordinates. The partition of territory was a little different from the human administrative divisions, but there were also similarities. The monster king of the Verdant Province was the Ink Sea's dragon king.

Halfmoon was a monster general level monster, having just stepped into the field of this world's powerhouses, but her strength was already so high. Li Qingshan couldn't imagine what kind of realm the monster marshals and monster kings above her had reached. A fire ignited inside his heart. Whether he was a monster or a human, he had to be the strongest powerhouse in any case. There was no way he could let people step over his head.

Halfmoon was humming a song at this moment, standing on Li Qingshan's head, grabbing Li Qingshan's horns, standing high and overlooking the scene from above.

Li Qingshan couldn't help but imagine the scene of squeezing her inside his palm and listening to her soft voice call him master. Another blaze welled up in his lower abdomen, and it wasn't merely fighting spirit.

Li Qingshan carried this sort of bottomless ambition with him, the fire of his desires overflowing the sky. A fishy wind rushed forth from between the trees just at the same moment he was inside his fantasies. A bloody mouth swallowed wide open in his direction. Halfmoon whose body was invisible actually bore the brunt of it. She casually swept her hand away. "Reaction's too slow!" She drew a silver arching light in the air.

A snake head big as a water jar dropped down, and fresh blood spewed forth. It was actually a python with flowery patterns on its body hidden inside the forest.

Li Qingshan dodged the blood. He raised his head and saw the snake's body twisting around the tree trunk. It was fully several dozen feet long, its color the same as the tree trunk. It was entirely invisible if one didn't look carefully, simply a living "[Anaconda](#)." He'd already seen quite a few strange things already, but he still couldn't help but sigh with feeling. This world actually had such creepy and fearsome creatures. It could have casually exterminated everyone if it'd gone to a human village.

Reference to the movie series of the same name.

Li Qingshan sniffed the monster qi on the snake's body, realizing this was a so-called monster beast. The wuxia novels he'd read hadn't been few in numbers, so he immediately went up the tree to take the [snake gall](#). Only then did he find out that the snake skin was tough to the extreme. Even if it wasn't infused with monster power anymore, he still had to spend some time and efforts to cut it open. It was easy to imagine how fearsome this monster beast would be if still alive. It'd merely picked the wrong target to attack and been instantly killed by Halfmoon.

The snake gall/snake bile is used in traditional Chinese medicine, often described as having all kinds of magical uses, a little like ginseng.

Li Qingshan grabbed the black stinky snake gall. Thanks to his spirit that didn't fear pain and labor during practice, Li Qingshan closed his eyes and swallowed it down in one go under Little An's shocked eyes.

Halfmoon said curiously, "Why did you swallow the poison sack?"

"What, poison sack!" Li Qingshan's expression changed at once. His originally greenish black face became even more ashen. His heartbeat sped up, the toxicity attacking the heart. To speak bluntly, Li Qingshan hadn't done anything like fetching snake gall even adding his two lives together. How could he become a countryside survival expert just because he'd traveled to another world.

"Meowhahahaha!" Halfmoon rolled on the floor in laughter. She took out another round ball from inside the snake body when she

saw Li Qingshan had fallen on the ground from the poison. She stuffed it inside Li Qingshan's mouth. "Yes, this one is the snake gall."

Li Qingshan's whole body had already started to stiffen. He barely managed to swallow the snake gall down. The poison only alleviated somewhat. Halfmoon then took out another spirit pill from her little bell. "This is a Poison Dispelling Pellet!"

Li Qingshan lay down for a while. He waited for the medicine to exert its effects, only sitting up after that. He said to the worried Little An, "I'm fine!"

Halfmoon groped out another spirit pill with a backhand and gave it to him. "This is a reward!"

"What reward?"

"It was really too funny. You have to keep working hard in the future, and provide happy amusements for this mistress."

And so did Li Qingshan collect a medicine pill with an ashen face.

Little An spit out the "Cremation Blood Fire" and very quickly incinerated the python monster beast. It could be regarded as taking revenge for Li Qingshan.

The blood fire cleanly burned the python to ashes, leaving only a snake skeleton behind. It then spun in the air before returning

inside his mouth. These monster beasts had abundant and powerful blood energies that even a hundred persons added together couldn't match. It was greatly beneficial for him.

Halfmoon stared in a daze. "Turns out this is what Little White eats."

Li Qingshan took note of it and thought he should help him find some blood food more often.

The trees grew increasingly taller as they went along the depths of the Boundless Mountains. Li Qingshan would unexpectedly feel himself negligible even with a body more than ten feet tall.

They also encountered more and more monster beasts along the way. Various kinds of creatures only existing inside imaginations and legends appeared in front of them.

A great bird with wind and thunder curling around its body and wings over a hundred feet when spread out flew in the sky. A spider as big as a table with a ghost face imprinted on its back had woven a spider web as big as a soccer field between a dozen antique trees reaching to the sky.

But it was fortunate not every one of them would charge and attack them. For example a leopard as tall as a man chose to turn around and leave after observing a while in the surroundings. Although they didn't have very high intellect, those monster beasts still had keener senses when it came to judging strength and weakness. They were extremely prudent and would definitely not

attack casually. They weren't monsters in video games, but real living creatures.

Chapter 94: Innate Supernatural Skills

Li Qingshan didn't try to make trouble for himself either at such a time. Meanwhile, the monster beasts who dared to attack Li Qingshan all possessed astounding strength. Even Halfmoon became increasingly cautious, carefully curbing her monster qi and not casually acting any longer. Li Qingshan could often only resume his way after going through a bitter battle.

He became more proficient in fighting through one killing after another. He didn't use all that many techniques or tricks to deal with those fearsome monster beasts. He had to use strength to break strength most of the time, meeting hard with hard as he fought his way through.

But they also met many monster beasts extremely difficult to deal with, and then Little An's Cremation Blood Fire took much of the credit as it burned many monster beasts to death. It was even fiercer and more powerful than Li Qingshan. This supernatural skill hadn't seemed like much at first, but it increasingly displayed its might as time went on.

The Cremation Blood Fire also became more ferocious along with the burning of those many monster beasts. It swept everything before it wherever they went, again and again allowing the weaker side to prevail against the strong. It even attracted frequent sidelong glances from Halfmoon. She had no idea what supernatural skill or magical technique he had cultivated to actually have a restraining effect on every living creature of flesh and blood.

But Little An couldn't speak so she couldn't find out. Li Qingshan merely made some excuses about him knowing it from the start. Little An was still unable to reshape a body of flesh after that though; he actually needed human sacrifices. There wasn't anything he could do, he could only wait to restore a human shape himself before worrying about it.

They never met any monster beast at the monster general level all along the way however, and not even a monster with a monster core. It wasn't that Li Qingshan's luck was good enough. Halfmoon would often order Li Qingshan to halt or turn around all of a sudden when Li Qingshan was in the middle of walking forward.

Monsters and demons had their own hunting territories just the same as wild beasts, but it wasn't something ordinary people could perceive. Halfmoon could keenly distinguish the changes in monster qi and its strength or weakness, then make them detour around some dangerous areas. Many times they traveled along the edges of invisible territories. Li Qingshan was responsible for managing their general direction in the meantime.

All along the way they went and stopped then went. Their relationship with each other became much more harmonious, or one might say that Li Qingshan's tolerance became much stronger. He could feel his irritable inner heart gradually quieting down along the cultivation of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. This was mostly thanks to those spirit pills, and together with Halfmoon's extremely adorable appearance they greatly increased Li Qingshan's tolerance level, or one might say that there was nothing he could do even if he weren't tolerant.

Of course, now what motivated his cultivation was already not simply a matter of transforming into a human shape anymore. He also wanted to see the scene of a certain cat shouting master. His idea of making Gu Yanying his wife naturally took a rear seat following the reasoning that white swans in the distance weren't as good as nearby red braised pork. Moreover, Halfmoon was far more than red braised pork, she was simply a ravenous feast for the glutton. He would truly have a hard time if the two of them were to stand before him and make him choose. He compared them over and over again many times inside his mind and still couldn't reach an answer.

The frog was still hoping and hopping on the ground that he was already tangled about which swan to eat, even considering the twelve ways he could eat a swan. Li Qingshan brimmed with hope for the future without knowing his place, filled as he was with such sexual fantasies.

Many days went by in a blur. Halfmoon suddenly said against Li Qingshan's ears that day, "Stop!"

Li Qingshan hurriedly halted his steps and restrained his aura following the techniques taught by the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. The sounds from a series of heavy steps came their way from the distance. A giant lizard looking like a dinosaur walked past in front of them.

Li Qingshan wouldn't have been very afraid if it had been a genuine dinosaur instead, but this giant lizard breathed cold air in and out of its mouth, and the vegetation transformed into ice sculptures wherever it went.

“What a heavy monster qi.” Li Qingshan had learned quite a few things already, for instance how to judge whether an opponent was strong and weak from their monster qi.

Halfmoon said curiously after the giant ice lizard had gone past. “How do you do it? You can unexpectedly restrain your aura so thoroughly? Is that your innate supernatural skill? However aren’t you yet to form your meowster dan? Could you actually be a spirit beast?”

“I don’t know either, I just need to hold my breath in!” Li Qingshan had already learned that monsters didn’t chase after magical techniques with innumerable changes and forms like humans. They continuously unearthed their own body’s strength instead, cultivating their innate supernatural skills. It lacked flexibility and changes, but the power was usually extremely great.

Innate divine skills weren’t actually innate from birth, they could only be awakened after forming a monster core. Furthermore, their power followed along the wake of the body’s own power, and one could possibly awaken even more innate supernatural skills.

Shadow Blink and Moon Concealment were precisely Halfmoon’s innate supernatural skills, extremely rarely seen concealment and movement supernatural skills. She was probably not an ordinary cat monster to begin with, but possibly some sort of spirit cat!

“Tch!” Halfmoon showed disdain for Li Qingshan’s tongue in

cheek way of talking, but she actually didn't pry any deeper. Monsters were usually reluctant to tell others about their own lifelong supernatural skills. Li Qingshan was becoming increasingly mysterious in her eyes however.

Suddenly a beam of rainbow light glided across the horizon, and a sword-like gaze swept back and forth on the ground.

Li Qingshan's vision was sharp and he saw the human figure inside the rainbow light with one glance.

The Soaring Dragon Elder also saw Li Qingshan on the ground. "Monster general? However the monster qi is too weak!" A simple monster with a humanoid shape was a rarely seen sight. "What's that thing?" He also saw Little An beside Li Qingshan.

Li Qingshan's vision met with that sword-like gaze. He was suddenly terrified inside, as if there was a divine sword suspended on top of his head that could cut his head off the next moment.

This was a sword immortal!

He'd admittedly already seen Gu Yanying's graceful figure, but his heart still brimmed with shock when he genuinely saw a sword immortal from the legends. Who'd never dreamed about the stylish chic of flying on a sword and streaking across the horizon?

Then he suddenly remembered his current status and appearance, that of a monstrous demon. How should he deal with

that sword immortal if he were to drop down from the sky?

Li Qingshan only sighed in relief after the long rainbow skimmed by without pausing in the slightest. The Soaring Dragon Elder was conscious he had an important matter to deal with and wouldn't spend his efforts on this kind of "little monster."

As to Halfmoon, she'd even held her breath in right then. She opened her mouth at this time, "Disaster, it's someone from the Hidden Sword Palace! Fortunately my Moon Concealment is fierce, or otherwise I'd be done for. Of course, there's also a tiny little bit of your meowrit, wait a bit and I'll give you a spirit pill to eat." She rubbed Li Qingshan's head. She would have been found out already if she'd traveled alone.

"What Hidden Sword Palace? Did that man rush after you?" Li Qingshan felt that things weren't good. This task was more dangerous than what he'd imagined.

Halfmoon didn't conceal anything either. She roughly talked about the conflict between concubine Serenity and concubine Brightness. Li Qingshan's expression became even uglier, and even the spirit pill felt like it was burning inside his hand. Those were great characters who shook the Verdant province. Even several lives weren't enough if a small figure like him were to be involved in such a vortex.

Halfmoon tried to boost his morale and said, "Don't be so worried sick. As long as we flee to the Dragon province, that old guy won't dare to chase after us even if you gave him another gut. At that time cats will fly free in the sky and leap free in the

seas, meowhahahaha!”

Li Qingshan didn't share her optimism. The arrow was already fired however. He could only gamble, no matter what danger awaited on the way.

Halfmoon suddenly took her laughter back, exposing an unprecedentedly solemn expression. “Big Black, if, I'm saying if, we're truly found out, you have to charge up and bite him tight. You can't let go no matter how he kills you and hacks you. I will seize the opportunity to flee. In the future I'll painstakingly cultivate my supernatural skills and take revenge for you!”

Chapter 95: Accidentally Charging Into A Rathole

“Good grief, are your words still human? Could you please have a little more conscience? Aren’t owners supposed to protect their pets?”

“I’m not human to begin with. What’s a conscience? Hee hee, you finally admit I’m your mistress!” Halfmoon beamed. She lightly coughed twice: “As long as you shout out loud mistress save meow, I’ll definitely come protect you.”

Li Qingshan said, “I’d rather die!”

Halfmoon said, “This isn’t cute, you’ll be abandoned by your owner.”

Li Qingshan said, “I beg you to abandon me as fast as you can!”

They started again on their way as they bickered. But it seemed a layer of shadows had wrapped around their hearts and minds. Li Qingshan’s following actions became much more cautious, walking as much as possible inside the dense forests in the depths of the mountains, and he dodged past those monster beasts as much as he could when they encountered them, definitely abandoning any zeal for fighting.

His technique for restraining his qi also became increasingly stronger as he progressed deeper into the cultivation of his [Spirit

Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]. Those keenly perceptive monster beasts would often walk past just beside him, and they wouldn't find the slightest thing different about him.

Halfmoon admired her own correct choice. She wasn't the slightest bit stingy with the spirit pills on hand as she "fed" them to Li Qingshan, but this was mostly because she was used to throwing wealth away by the handful. Li Qingshan also had the constant nagging feeling she wanted to fatten him up so she could use him as a meat shield.

At long last they traveled in peace for many days. Halfmoon said, "This place is already not far from the Dragon province."

The three of them once again rested inside a natural cave when daylight drew near. The cave wasn't sealed off. Rather, there was a cold and gloomy wind blowing from the endless quiet and dark depths of the cave, connecting it somewhere unknown.

Halfmoon lay on the cat basket and rested in it. Li Qingshan and Little An sat at one side in cultivation.

A rustling sound came from below the ground, getting denser and denser, closer and closer.

Li Qingshan opened his eyes and saw that Halfmoon had already stood up, her two cat ears standing erect. Obviously she'd also heard the movements?

“There’s monster qi!”

Countless eyes lit up inside the darkness, densely dotted together, even issuing the crack crack sounds of shattered stones, sending cold shivers to the bottom of one’s hearts.

There were monster beasts coming from underground, more than one at that!

Li Qingshan had already been accustomed to such a life long ago. He stood high on alert together with Little An while Halfmoon conscientiously concealed her figure.

Mice drilled from the the depths of the cave like a tide. Li Qingshan frowned tight when he took in this scene, even if he was already used to seeing all sorts of monster beasts. But this was only the beginning. The mice drilling out from the cave became increasingly bigger, the small ones like dogs, the big ones like bears.

The cave was instantly submerged in a sea of mice. All sorts of mice crowded together up and down, all of them staring at Li Qingshan. The sounds made by the grind of their teeth joined together in a single chorus reverberating inside the cave, sending chills and disgust to one’s heart.

Li Qingshan was calm and fearless. There was a nemesis of theirs here. But then he felt Halfmoon actually slightly trembling as she stood on his body. He lowered his voice and mocked: “Are you actually afraid of mice?”

“Too... Too disgusting. What lousy place did you pick! Hurry... hurry up and kill them!” When had Halfmoon ever seen such things inside the province capital!

Li Qingshan said brimming with malice, “Isn’t that your favorite food? They came just in time, you can catch them and use them as dinner, you hurry up and start your meal!” Take revenge if you have enmity, settle your scores if you have complaints. As to the place, there was probably no choice. Those mice monsters had a body strength far exceeding that of ordinary mice, and they’d probably already dug this entire area into a rathole. It would be hard to avoid falling onto their doorstep no matter where one chose to stop over.

“I’ll eat you first!”

Li Qingshan’s voice had hardly fallen when he felt pain on his ear. Halfmoon had bitten his ear all of a sudden, but apart from the sharp pain brought by the teeth, he also felt soft lips and a moist tongue. It was actually a somewhat ecstatic experience.

“I don’t have this kind of fetish!” Li Qingshan shook his head. “Little An, release fire!”

Little An had been waiting for this moment already. He immediately jumped up and sprayed out rolling blood flames roasting toward the group of mice.

The group of mice shrieked and screeched. The small and weak

ordinary mice turned into ashes in the space of an instant, their blood and flesh nourishing the fire's momentum. But those big mice unexpectedly pounced toward Li Qingshan and tried to bite him even with their bodies on fire from head to toes. The strength of their vitality was for all to see.

But the stronger the vitality, the more exuberant the Cremation Blood Fire. The blood fire soared to the sky with the countless mice monsters as fuel, transforming into a fire snake inside the cave opening its maws wide as it bit toward those big mice.

Little An had simply taught himself without any teacher, and he was increasingly free in his use of the technique. The alarmed mice monsters ran away in panic as they saw the emergence of a natural predator.

There was lingering fear in Li Qingshan's heart. It was all thanks to the great power of Little An's technique, otherwise it would have been difficult to avoid suffering losses once drowned by so many mice. Especially those mice monsters' steel teeth, they obviously hadn't been made to eat peanuts. He'd have been nauseated to death even if they'd won.

"Careful!" Halfmoon whispered softly in Li Qingshan's ear, having already let go of it. Li Qingshan felt a warm gentle breeze enter his ear, but he didn't have time yet to savor this feeling when he also felt a gust of mighty monster qi come from the depths of the cave.

"Woosh!"

A beam of yellow light fired out and went through the fire snake, hitting Little An and sending him flying out.

“Little An!” Li Qingshan hurriedly caught Little An. He saw thin threads of fissures on his body. One had to know his body was even harder than steel after cultivation. It was obvious to see how fearsome the might of this strike had been!

The yellow light was like a living creature. It turned in the air and shot toward Li Qingshan, its speed reaching the utter limit and not giving him any time to react.

Halmoon casually grabbed forth, and unexpectedly caught the yellow light in her hand. A round yellow bead spinning on itself appeared when she opened her hand and took a look. “Monster core!”

The newcomer was a monster who’d formed a monster core. A mouse resembling an elephant charged out from within the cave with a huge rumble. Its mice eyes flickered with sharp light; it clearly possessed wisdom already. It fixated at the empty air with staring eyes, uncertain what it was that had restricted its “monster core,” then it charged at Li Qingshan with a shrill scream.

This was the first time Li Qingshan exchanged blows with a monster who’d cultivated a monster core. He immediately sensed his opponent’s frightfulness, and his body continuously sent off instinctive warnings, also reminding him that he wasn’t this thing’s match.

Yellow light flashed inside the the mouse monster's eyes. An earth spike suddenly stabbed upward under Li Qingshan's feet. Troubles brewed close at feet. The earth spike was both sharp and fast. Li Qingshan couldn't react in time.

Halfmoon lifted Li Qingshan and soared in the air. The earth spike finally exhausted its power after piercing up ten feet. There was cold sweat all over Li Qingshan's body as he looked down.

Little An once again sent layer after layer of blood flames burning after the mouse monster, but they were unexpectedly blocked by layers of yellow light and couldn't inch inside.

The mouse shrieked. That monster core shook increasingly stronger in mid-air, anxious to return to its body.

"Hold tight on it!" Halfmoon casually threw the monster core to Li Qingshan. Li Qingshan hurriedly squeezed it, but he hadn't imagined that this monster core was so powerful, almost escaping from his hold despite him exhausting all his body's strength. This mouse monster's power was presently so fierce and sinister already, wouldn't he have no leg left to stand on if it were to recover its inner core.

The Spirit Turtle Guards the Sea and quells the evil spirits!

Li Qingshan suddenly operated his entire monster qi and revolved it inside his body, deathly suppressing the monster core in his hand. The mouse monster saw it and wouldn't let him get

away with it. It charged forward with a shriek, its enormous body resembling an elephant actually as fast as lightning and not sluggish in the slightest.

A fishy gust of wind rushed to his face. Li Qingshan stooped down and lowered his head, using the true form of the “Bull Demon Horn Gore.” His pair of horns viciously collided with eerie white mouse teeth.

Chapter 96: Great Mouse King

Clang. Horns knocked together with teeth like a clash of metal.

A huge boom rocked the cave.

The mouse monster pushed Li Qingshan back and crashed him on the stony wall. Li Qingshan's two feet plowed two deep trails on the ground. The strength he was most proud of was unexpectedly not a match at all for the mouse monster. Monsters with an inner core and monsters without were two entirely different things. His heart abruptly banged in ominous warning. He saw a cunning light shine inside the mouse monster's eyes, then another earth spike pierced from the rocky wall behind his back while he was unable able to move an iota.

Little An held his sword in both hands and slashed it down instantly at the mouse monster's neck. A long mouse tail swept him like a steel whip and sent him flying away.

Halfmoon acted once again, releasing four sharp rays from the tips of her claws. Fear floated inside the mouse monster's eyes. The sharp rays easily ripped open that layer of monster qi protecting the mouse monster. The previously irresistible mouse monster was cut open in many chunks and died on the spot.

No matter how powerful and intrepid it'd seemed to be, it was unable to stop even one hit all the same when meeting a monster level general monster like Halfmoon who'd gone through one heavenly tribulation.

Li Qingshan kicked off the mouse monster's corpse. The monster core inside his hand wasn't vibrating anymore. He groped behind him. There was already a bulge on the stone wall. He'd have been heavily injured just a fraction later, if not dead.

"Too dumb!" evaluated Halfmoon.

"Would I have come to this place to begin with if not because of you?" Li Qingshan hadn't even cultivated half a year even adding it all together, while that mouse monster's life had exceeded a hundred years at the lowest. How could it be so easy for the weak to defeat the strong when there was an absolute disparity in strength.

Halfmoon was about to speak but she suddenly seemed to feel something and her expression changed at once. "Hurry up, we have to leave this place!"

Li Qingshan hadn't sensed anything, but he immediately carried Little An then turned around and walked away when he saw her with such a grave face.

A burst of tremors rocked through the cave. The originally several dozen feet wide cave mouth seemed to come alive as it bit down and closed off, thoroughly sealing the cave. Not even a thread of light could shine inside.

Halfmoon said in a quiet voice, "Restrict your monster qi." Then she once again concealed her body.

Li Qingshan suppressed his monster qi down then bent his ears and listened. Noises once again came from the depths of the cave.

A big mouse drilled out, actually standing on its two feet. It didn't even look at Li Qingshan but yelled at the top of its lungs in a strange tone, "The Great Mouse King has arrived!"

Li Qingshan opened his eyes and mouth wide as he stood dumbstruck. He wasn't only surprised that a mouse could speak, he was even more surprised a group of monsters would actually put on such ostentatious airs.

Sixteen mice standing like men walked out from the depths of the cave shortly after, carrying a throne on a great sedan chair.

A big fatty sat on the sedan chair; it even wore a glittering royal crown on its head, just the same as a king. It had shifty brows and ratty eyes on its face, exposing long mouse teeth, and even dragged a mouse tail behind it.

Two female mice, possibly maids, lifted two great fans behind him.

Halfmoon grinned from ear to ear when she saw, but Li Qingshan couldn't squeeze a smile out. Those who'd already changed into a humanoid shape were at least monster general level monsters. As to the mice monsters carrying the sedan chair, the monster qi radiating from them was even above that of the big mouse from earlier.

The Great Mouse King lazily said, “Who broke into my Black Rat Mountain and killed my Great White Teeth general!” It completely ignored the more than ten feet tall Li Qingshan standing in front of him. It not for a voice too shrill, it would truly have some of a king’s manners.

That mouse who was probably an eunuch yelled, “Great King, it’s this guy!” The crowd of mice spoke in one voice, “The Great King is wise.”

The Great Mouse King sized Li Qingshan from head to toes as if it’d only noticed Li Qingshan just now. “What kind of monster are you?” He felt fear inside when he saw Li Qingshan had transformed into a humanoid appearance. Only monster generals having gone through one heavenly tribulation would be able to do so usually.

But he couldn’t feel the slightest bit of monster qi from Li Qingshan, so he couldn’t help but become increasingly prudent. The mouse monster’s body cut into several parts on the ground also seemed to bear witness.

Li Qingshan keenly discovered the changes in the expression on the Great Mouse King’s face. He suddenly understood why Halfmoon had made him restrain his monster qi and couldn’t help but admire the sharpness of her mind. He said unafraid, “I be the Black Mountain Old Monster. This Great White Teeth general of yours was really too reckless and actually dared to sneak on me. I’ve already killed him. Now you’re blocking the way, do you also want to decide life and death in a battle with me?” So said he even

went a step forward.

One couldn't but admit this monster body of Li Qingshan's was exceedingly formidable, with bull horns as spears and sharp claws as blades.

The Great Mouse King shrank back a little, worthy of the famous shyness of a mouse. It would definitely have pounced on Li Qingshan and gnawed him clean if he had been an ordinary monster, but it suspected Li Qingshan of being a monster general and had immediately shrunk back. It didn't even have any thought about taking revenge for his subordinate. "Misunderstanding, misunderstanding! May I know which monster marshal are your honorable self under?"

Li Qingshan hadn't known that the hierarchy was also so strict in the world of monsters and he still had to mix with a "big brother." Halfmoon quietly pronounced a name against Li Qingshan's ear.

Li Qingshan immediately said, "I am a subordinate of [Lord Ink Feather](#). He personally sent me to the Boundless Mountains to handle something."

Ink Feather is Mo Yu, the one mentioned by Gu Yanying in chapter 92. I changed my mind and decided to translate his name.

The Great Mouse King fell into great awe. It even jumped down from its throne. "So it turns out you came from the Ink Sea and are lord Ink Feather's messenger. Could it be about that cat demon still?"

Li Qingshan stiffened for a second inside, but he nodded outwardly. “Precisely!”

The Great Mouse King said, “Haven’t things been made clear already? We’ll certainly catch that cat monster as long as we see her, we’ll definitely not disappoint lord Ink Feather.” It thought, no wonder he sent out this person. Being able to conceal his monster qi was indeed suitable for tracking and pursuit.

The corners of Li Qingshan’s eyes twitched. No wonder Halfmoon had been so cautious even in the depths of the mountains and had maintained her Moon Concealment at all times. It turned out that not only humans but even monsters and demons were investigating the traces of her presence. She indeed had no foothold inside this Verdant province. The degree of this present task’s dangers far exceeded what he’d originally imagined.

There would be a messy battle if she were to appear at this moment, and it would alert every monster in these Boundless Mountains even if she were to win. They would come together to seize her and make this whole flight end in utter failure.

Li Qingshan became increasingly careful inside. He said some casual perfunctory words: “This turns out to be a conflict between people on the same side. However you’re a mouse and she’s a cat, aren’t you afraid you’ll be eaten.”

Halfmoon’s hand severely pinched Li Qingshan’s back. Am I going to eat these dirty things!

The Great Mouse King faced that eunuch mouse in charge of heralding duties, “You say, what’s this great king’s title?”

The eunuch mouse said, “Cat-Eating Mouse!” The crowd of mice said, “The Great King is wise!”

Halfmoon gnashed her teeth in rancor. Her fingers circled a full turn as they pinched Li Qingshan’s skin on his back.

The Great Demon King proudly laughed out loud. He said when he saw Li Qingshan’s face twitch, “Is something wrong?”

Li Qingshan gnashed his teeth and said, “There’s nothing wrong! You stay on your guard. I still have things waiting for me, I’ll leave first.”

The Great Mouse King waved its hand. The cave restored its original state and daylight came back inside.

Li Qingshan turned around and walked away. The Great Mouse King twirled its mouse whiskers under its nose. “I feel there’s something fishy. This here is my Black Mouse Mountain, normally I should be the one called Black Mountain Old Monster.”

The crowd of mice said, “The Great King is wise!”

Li Qingshan left Black Mouse Mountain and traveled for several dozen miles.

Halfmoon said, “Sooner or later I’ll put all these wretched mice to the pan and deep-fry them.”

Li Qingshan said, “You get down from me!”

Notes:

Okay, sto this includes an image, which I, unfortunately, don't know who it references it to. I took the liberty to find a better pic on the web - Lisa H.



Belhar



Chapter 97: Ice Sword Cliff

Halfmoon said with her eyes wide open, “You actually dare to be so rude with this mistress!” Her eyes seemed increasingly wider.

Li Qingshan glared at Halfmoon and said, “You never talked about this, you were obviously intentionally hiding it.”

Halfmoon felt inexplicable panic in her heart under his intense stare. She looked left and right and tried to divert the topic: “Haha, did I? You never asked either!”

Li Qingshan sat down cross-legged. “Here is the end of the road for me.”

Halfmoon exposed her sharp claws and said threateningly, “What? You say that again?”

Li Qingshan said, “Your supernatural skills are vast, and even if you encounter danger you can use Shadow Blink and walk off, but there’s eight chances out of ten it’s a road to death for us. If you want to kill me then kill, I don’t want to be made use of any longer. It’s fine as long as you let Little An go.”

Little An caught Li Qingshan’s sleeve and desperately shook his head.

Halfmoon said, “You think I won’t dare!” She waved her claws down fast as wind and thunder. It was impossible for Li Qingshan

to dodge, and his skin and flesh weren't all that much tougher than that mouse monster.

The claws stopped only a hairbreadth away from Li Qingshan's nape. Halfmoon's chest rose and fell. She turned around and said, "Hmph, I'm too lazy to kill you. Go if you want to go, suit yourself."

Li Qingshan looked deeply at her. He turned around and was just about to stride away.

Halfmoon caught Li Qingshan's little finger and said in a gentle voice, "The Dragon province isn't far from here anymore, we had a promise!"

Li Qingshan turned his head back and saw that her eyes were pointed elsewhere, not looking at him. Sunlight fell on her eyelashes and cast a shade on her eyes that resembled pools of water, seeming to exude a thread of sorrow and weakness that stirred his heartstrings.

Li Qingshan said after a long silence, "Alright, I'll accompany you for a little longer, it ought to complete the promise."

The clouds instantly parted from Halfmoon's face. She stuck her tongue out and let out a crafty smile. "Really easy to coax." Where was there any half shred of sorrow or weakness left.

Li Qingshan hung his head down, his expression instantly black.

Little An watched Li Qingshan with some pity.

“It’s a promise! A promise!” Halfmoon danced proudly hither and yon around Li Qingshan, then finally leaped on top of his head and urged, “Let’s hurry to set out!”

Li Qingshan sent her a fierce glare. He continued forth on the journey.

It had been a long time since he last walked under the sunlight. The sunlight from the winter sun was soft and warm. A long time had already gone by in a blur, and he’d already fully adapted to this monster body.

Halfmoon said, “Don’t feel embarrassed. There’s nothing shameful about losing to my ultimate skill.”

“Ultimate skill?”

Halfmoon said, “Actually, I’ve been wanting to leave a long time ago already, but I’m always powerless as soon as queen concubine Serenity exposes this kind of expression.”

Li Qingshan said, “But you still left in the end.”

Halfmoon said proudly, “Because I’m relatively heartless meow!”

Li Qingshan said, “That’s not something to show off about! Those

heartless to others, others will also be heartless to you.”

“Is that so?”

Inside the Black Mouse Mountain, the Great Mouse King had jumped down on the ground and fully buried its head inside the soil. Every little sound within ten miles or even a hundred miles spread to its ears along with the earth. The back and forth between Li Qingshan and Halfmoon did naturally not escape its hearing.

The innate supernatural skills awakened by monsters were mainly offensive or defensive in nature. However, it was actually proficient in an extremely rarely seen “Earth Listening Art” that happened to fit its nature overcautious to a fault and timid as a mouse.

It suddenly lifted its head covered in dust and said with a face full of a dirt, “Indeed fishy!”

The crowd of mice said, “The Great King is wise!”

“Stop talking, hurry up and chase them!”

Halfmoon’s ears suddenly stood up. “Disaster, they’re pursuing us, hurry up and leave!”

Li Qingshan lifted his feet and dashed madly forward. Every step left a deep footprint behind when it trod on the ground, then the next step would fall already several hundred feet away.

“Too slow!” Halfmoon felt it was still too slow.

Li Qingshan said, “Let’s see you try to run while carrying me!”

Halfmoon groped out a spirit pill and tossed it inside Li Qingshan’s mouth, then she also grasped out a spiritual talisman. The color of the talisman wasn’t the usual yellow, but a crimson red.

A gust of nimble qi rose as the spiritual medicine melted, and Li Qingshan felt as if his body became twice lighter. The talisman broke and a hurricane wrapped around Li Qingshan. It seemed his body had become weightless.

Li Qingshan stamped down and directly soared in the sky. The sky was dazzlingly blue. The forest of tall ancient trees was under his feet, and it seemed the curve of the chains of peaks undulating up and down in the distance was about to fly up.

He turned his gaze back and took a look. A rolling cloud of smoke and dust was sure enough rushing their way. He’d already adjusted his stature when he landed back on the ground. His body leaned forward and directly charged forth. Each stride crossed over thousand feet, and those small hills weren’t obstacles any longer as he crossed past them in one jump.

Halfmoon stood on his shoulder and laughed out loud. “Charge! Meowhahaha!”

A rolling smoke of dust swept their way at an alarming speed. The one in the lead inside the smoke was precisely that Great Mouse King. Its feet trampled on waves formed by countless mice. It saw Li Qingshan at one glance and said, "You hurry up to stop."

Halfmoon knew she'd been exposed and no longer hid. She scowled: "Only idiots would stop, dumb-ass dumb-ass!"

Yellow light flashed in the Great Mouse King's eyes and one earth spike pierced up after another. Whether speed or power, they were ten times more ferocious compared to that great mice general, often stabbing at the places Li Qingshan's strides fell on.

Li Qingshan barged left and charged right, changing his direction nonstop. He'd just moved sideways and dodged past a spike that there was movement again under his feet. He shouted "Bull Demon Hoof Stamp" explosively and stepped on the spike that'd only begun to emerge, then borrowed the force to soar into the sky. The pain from the stab under his foot was hard to endure, but fortunately the sole of his feet had already become tough bull hooves, otherwise he would have been crippled this time.

He flew up thousand feet in the air. The patch of blue light on the horizon blurred his eyes, distracting him from the pain on his foot.

Halfmoon pointed at the horizon and said, "Big Black, Little White, did you see? The Ice Sword Cliff is right in front of us!"

An ice cliff rising forever to the sky for thousands of miles

stretched across the Boundless Mountain Range, as if a god had struck an ice sword down and cut the massive dragon-like Boundless Mountain Range into two sections.

This here was the dividing line between the two Verdant and Dragon provinces.

A spark of hope suddenly ignited inside Li Qingshan's heart, like a traveler who'd seen the end of his journey. He understood that one could watch a mountain but kill a horse trying to reach it, and also knew that the ice cliff should still be very far from where they were.

But he had the constant feeling with him that they could reach an unprecedented situation if they could step across that ice cliff.

When he lowered his head down, he saw that the originally hard rocks he was about to land his feet on had become quicksand thousand feet across. His entire person heavily plunged into the quicksand.

The quicksand revolved like a whirlpool and produced a mighty suction, as if countless pairs of hands were pulling Li Qingshan down toward the earth. It was just the same as a tiger fallen from the mountains to the bright plains; he couldn't display his power even if he had a strength of ten thousand pounds. The more he struggled the deeper he sank.

The Great Mouse King seized the occasion and caught up in a spurt of energy. It said with a great laugh, "Trapped right? You

actually dared to underestimate this great king, you all obediently stay here for me!”

“The Great King is wise!”

“Meooow!” A cat cry sounded, even more tyrannical than the snarl of a fierce tiger. Halfmoon stood on Li Qingshan’s shoulder, emitting powerful monster qi from head to toes as she stared straight at the Great Mouse King. “Cat-Eating Mouse was it? Although it’s very disgusting, today I’m still going to taste the flavor of mice.”

Chapter 98: A Sword Immortal Arrives

“Great king, it’s a cat!” The crowd of mice was greatly startled, one and all about to immediately drill into the ground in panic and flee in disarray.

The Great Mouse King Cat-Eating Mouse finally found the cat it was looking for. Elaborate thoughts went through its mind. An ordinary cat could eat ordinary mice, then a monster general level cat monster could naturally eat monster general level mice monsters. After that its two legs went soft and it coolly said, “Ev... evacuate!”

“The Great King is wise!” said the crowd of mice who dug holes in the ground and drilled inside on the spot.

Therefore, a great herd of mice monsters had come with overbearing momentum, then immediately ran off in a flurry when they saw the cat Halfmoon.

Halfmoon went through a burst of loud meowhahahaha laughs.

Li Qingshan said in amazement, “Truly shy as a mouse.” The fearsome suction of the quicksand suddenly vanished. He stood up and leaped out of the sand pit.

Halfmoon’s expression changed at once. “Our whereabouts have been exposed already, hurry up and go!”

Li Qingshan suddenly turned his head back. A beam of rainbow light broke through the air on the faraway horizon to the south. The fierce and sharp aura seemed to rip his eyes open even with a single glance from far away. How would he dare to stand still and stay behind. He charged toward the Ice Sword Cliff.

Mountain rivers and vegetation flew back at mad speed. Li Qingshan originally felt he was fast like the wind, but that beam of rainbow light would come even closer every time he turned his head back. It caught up within a distance of a hundred miles in the space of a moment.

Li Qingshan said to Halfmoon, “We can’t go on like this, you leave first!”

Halfmoon said, “What are you saying, we’re already close to our goal.”

Li Qingshan said, “We’ll be caught up if it goes on like this. You go to the Dragon province by yourself!”

Halfmoon looked at Li Qingshan. She nodded heavily. “Then, Big Black, you take care of yourself. Don’t get yourself actually killed!” She vanished from sight the next moment, having blinked somewhere unknown.

Li Qingshan immediately suppressed the aura of his entire body and switched directions. He dashed to the east.

It wasn't that he was thinking of giving up his life for the cause or sacrificing himself for others. This sword immortal was mighty, and they couldn't offer any resistance. If he'd caught up to them, it'd have been most likely the sword immortal wouldn't have let go of him either after butchering Halfmoon. Then he'd also been lumped together with her and killed in the name of slashing demons for the sake of righteousness. There was no way he could have told them he was actually a human when such a moment came.

So he could only let Halfmoon run first. It was very possible this sword immortal would choose to first chase after Halfmoon in order to kill her, and then he could use the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] to suppress his aura. Maybe he could escape from a calamity, and Halfmoon wouldn't be weighed down by him either. It was the best choice for the both of them.

“Husbands and wives are birds of a flock, but they fly off on their own when disaster strikes. As to whether it results in life or death, one can only seek to help oneself and leave the rest to fate.” Such thoughts inexplicably emerged in Li Qingshan's mind.

Soaring Dragon Elder had been patrolling in the sky when he'd been suddenly disturbed by the activity on Black Mouse Mountain. However it wasn't rare either for monster beasts to kill each others inside the Boundless Mountains, so he hadn't paid any special mind to it.

“Monster general!” He only paid attention after a powerful monster qi had surged that only a monster general could have.

He'd induced his senses with all his focus, and then an even stronger monster qi had soared to the sky a moment later. He'd immediately responded and chased their way on his sword.

Struggles to the death between monster beasts could still be said to be common, but battles between monster generals were extremely rare, because every monster general who'd gone through one heavenly tribulation would have gained a certain amount of intelligence. They all nominally belonged under the order of the same monster king and were each commanded by their respective monster marshals, so they wouldn't fight casually.

If everything went as anticipated, then the monster cat he was looking for would be right there.

Indeed, he'd latched onto that monster qi when he was still several hundred miles away. On its side was actually that strange monster he'd seen once. He couldn't help but give rise to an anger at having been almost fooled. He'd originally believed this cat monster would have acted alone out of caution, but he hadn't expected she would still have helpers. No wonder he couldn't find her at all for so many days.

The sword light was approaching at high speed when the cat monster suddenly vanished from that little monster's shoulder. That little monster rushed toward the east meanwhile.

Soaring Dragon Elder hesitated a moment. He ignored Li Qingshan and continued to fly toward the Ice Sword Cliff. He was bound to block that cat monster's way out of the Verdant province. It would be trouble once she stepped onto the Dragon province's

soil.

Li Qingshan felt as if the flow of his blood was about to come to a halt when that sword-like gaze swept over him. He only let out a sigh of relief when that sword light swiftly rushed toward the north. He ran for another ten miles and reached a quiet and hidden ravine. He drilled inside and hid under a mountain precipice, then tightly repressed all of his monster qi.

He heaved a deep breath. He finally escaped from disaster!

Li Qingshan inwardly assessed this journey's gains. He'd obtained several dozen spiritual pills from Halfmoon, each of them with an even greater effect than the spirit ginseng. It'd made his [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] progress by leaps and bounds. Right now he still had a dozen spirit pills he hadn't had time to eat. He'd carefully stashed them inside a porcelain bottle. He probably wouldn't be too far from the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets]'s first layer once he ate all these spirit pills. Then he could recover a human shape after some painstaking cultivation and once again return to human society. Moreover he'd even gotten rid of that hateful cat monster who proclaimed herself his mistress. It was truly hitting two birds with one stone.

Li Qingshan rubbed Little An's head with a smile. It won't be long until I complete our promise.

Li Qingshan stayed entirely still and allowed the sands of time to drip by, grain by grain. He suddenly felt a burst of tremors going through the earth, but it then quickly vanished, followed by another burst of tremors.

The sky slowly darkened, and dark clouds once again draped across the sky. Great snow fell down, even accompanied by the whistle of sharp winds as it spread through the sky and covered the land.

Li Qingshan was even more at peace inside his mind. It was even more impossible to find him in such weather, and it was probably also comparatively easier for Halfmoon to escape! He was unexpectedly still somewhat reluctant to part with her, but she presumably had reached the Dragon province by now and would probably very soon be able to live the life of freedom she wanted! Green hills stood unchanging and blue rivers flowed eternal. Everyone would meet again if such was their fate.

“Secret of Ten Thousand Swords!”

A stern shout burst inside the snowstorm like a clap of thunder. It pulverized the wind and the snow, interrupted thoughts and feelings.

A boundless murderous intent shrouded down.

“Not good!” Li Qingshan hugged Little An as he stood up and immediately jumped. He turned his head back in mid-air and saw thousands upon thousands of sword rays crisscrossing amidst the wind and snow, shattering the precipice he’d relied on to hide himself until it crumbled down with rolling rumbles.

Li Qingshan threw himself on a small dried stream. He’d merely

raised his head that he saw three feet of greenish blade point directly between his eyebrows, only three inches away.

Soaring Dragon Elder held his sword in his right hand and stood on a boulder as he watched Li Qingshan with freezing coldness. “Say, where did that cat monster run off to?”

“You’re the Soaring Dragon Swordsman?” Li Qingshan was shocked the instant he saw the sword immortal’s appearance. The portrait inside the Dragon Gate Sect’s Ancestor Hall once again floated in his vision. The inheritance of the Dragon Gate Sect went back for multiple generations to hundred years in the past at least, but the Soaring Dragon Swordsman seemed only a little older compared to the portrait. If one then considered that the Dragon Gate Sect might have intentionally drawn him a little younger out of veneration for his august person, then there was simply no change at all. There was no word other than “immortal” with which to describe him.

However, this fearsome immortal was presently pointing at his head.

“You know me?” How sharp would Soaring Dragon Elder’s mind be, since he was able to form his golden core? “The matter of the Dragon Gate Sect was your doing?” The karma from olden days the Heavenly Fate Elder had spoken of should be precisely here.

Chapter 99: How Do The Stars Fall

“You know me?” How sharp would Soaring Dragon Elder’s mind be, since he was able to form his golden core? “The matter of the Dragon Gate Sect was your doing?” The karma from olden days the Heavenly Fate Elder had spoken of should be precisely here.

Li Qingshan secretly thought, what a wicked fate. He felt the mysteries of heaven were hard to fathom. Inexplicably and inexorably, there seemed to be a pair of hands weaving every thread of chance and destiny. It brought on karma’s retribution; he destroyed the Dragon Gate Sect, and then unexpectedly came across the Dragon Gate Sect’s founding ancestor in such a place, in such a manner. His heart inexplicably relaxed however when he heard that the Soaring Dragon Elder couldn’t find Halfmoon. At least they hadn’t been cleanly swept off.

Hence he said unperturbed, “The Dragon Gate Sect’s matter is indeed my doing. The Dragon Gate Sect ran amok in my homeland and acted rashly at will. They tried to harm me and kill me in order to snatch my spirit ginseng. My destroying them is heavenly justice and earthly morality.”

Soaring Dragon Elder faintly startled. Li Qingshan was articulate of mouth and nimble of mind, not looking as ignorant and uneducated as ordinary monsters and demons. It was somewhat out of his expectations, but then he picked his eyebrows as he heard the latter part.

The sword ray flashed and dazzled Li Qingshan’s eyes blind. He only realized he’d already been wounded by the sword when fresh

blood wildly spurting out from his shoulder. There was a terrible wound left on him from his shoulder all the way to his chest.

“A trivial monster still dares to speak of heavenly justice and earthly morality! Even more so, the spirituality of heaven and earth isn’t something for a monstrous demon like you to have. To cut off monsters and eradicate demons, that is precisely justice.”

Little An opened his mouth and spewed out the “Cremation Blood Fire,” but it couldn’t even reach within three feet of Soaring Dragon Elder before being thrown rolling back by the spiritual qi.

Soaring Dragon Elder threw him a glance. “Unfortunate, good innate roots, but you’ve also sunk into the way of demons. I’ll see you off to the underworld.” He once again coldly said to Li Qingshan, “Cut out the nonsense and quickly tell me where that cat monster went. I’ll give you a clean death and allow you to enter the wheel of reincarnation. Don’t be a monster in your next life. If you don’t, I’ll certainly wholly extinguish your soul.”

He’d pursued toward the north, but he’d lost “Halfmoon’s” aura. He’d broken several dozen mountain peaks with the Secret of Ten Thousand Swords and stirred the Boundless Mountains until not even chickens or dogs were left undisturbed. But who could stop him outside of great monsters at the marshal level.

In the end he still couldn’t force her out however. Halfmoon’s two supernatural powers were really too suited for stealth.

Soaring Dragon Elder’s mood was really bad. Since Heavenly Fate

Elder said this journey would certainly be successful and he could also settle old karma, then the answers he was looking for were on this little monster in all likelihood.

Li Qingshan said, “I don’t know!” Fresh blood spurted madly from his right shoulder as soon as his voice fell. He lowered his head and clenched his fists, clenching a handful of pebbles into pieces.

“Monsters have no feelings and no loyalty. You’re also but a discard it abandoned after making use of you. I’m actually wasting time trying to interrogate you.” An expression of pity and derision emerged on Soaring Dragon Elder’s face.

The sword light intensified dramatically and glided by horizontally, slicing toward Li Qingshan’s neck. Li Qingshan didn’t have any time to react just as before, unable to display the slightest move even if he were to possess a thousand tricks.

Never speaking unceasing nonsense, acting with incomparably neat efficiency without allowing for the slightest emotion, such was precisely a sword immortal.

Silver light fell down from the sky and shot toward the top of Soaring Dragon Elder’s head. That ray of light had such a tranquil holiness that an illusion emerged inside Li Qingshan’s mind, as if a crack had opened among the dark clouds in the sky and was letting the moonlight fall. But it was merely an illusion. The black clouds weren’t melting away yet, but still thick and heavy just as before. The great snow was increasingly violent.

A smile of pleasant surprise actually floated on the Soaring Dragon Elder's face. He abandoned Li Qingshan, and the sword charged directly toward the horizon to clash with that silver light with a turn of his wrist. The fierce soaring sword light was shattered by the tranquil silver light, which directly shot down and left a deep crescent-shaped hole on the ground.

Soaring Dragon Elder had transformed into a beam of light and evaded. Li Qingshan lifted his head. He saw a small figure at the top of the mountain ravine amidst the boundless wind and snow. The silver light had precisely been released from the crescent moon on her forehead.

“Meowhahahaha!” A familiar laughter pierced through the snowstorm, boring straight to the bottom of his heart.

Something that he couldn't put into words instantly bubbled within Li Qingshan's chest. But the words that came out when he opened his mouth were: “Fool, why did you come back? Go to your Dragon province!”

Halfmoon said, “You're not allowed to talk like this to your meowstress!”

Li Qingshan said, “I've already said you're not my mistress.”

Halfmoon said, “Just now I clearly heard you yell like mad mistress come save me!”

“Of course I didn’t.”

Halfmoon laughed out loud. “Maybe I heard wrong, or maybe you were shouting it inside your heart!”

Li Qingshan froze. Right, he had been shouting loud in his heart for someone to come save his life, begging for help from a certain someone. But not this cat monster, because it would be useless even if she came!

“Cat monster, the heavens gave you a road but you don’t walk on it!” Soaring Dragon Elder’s words came from the sky.

Halfmoon stuck out her tongue toward Soaring Dragon Elder and pulled her eyelid down, making a grimace. “Stinky old stuff, come chase after me!” Her stature turned around and vanished from sight. The cliff she was standing on was already shattered by sword light. Her monster qi once again disappeared.

Soaring Dragon Elder said, “One sword becomes ten thousand, Ten Thousand Sword Rain!” The sword in his hand became two from one, became three from two, and in the end transformed into thousand and ten thousand swords arrayed in the sky.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh. Countless beams of sword light dropped from the sky like torrential rain, shrouding the entire mountain ravine inside.

This was a fearsome immortal punishment! Under such a fearsome move, monsters and demons were as pigs and dogs, mortals were as ants and crickets.

Any deception was useless, any resourcefulness was falseness. Li Qingshan raised his head and watched the sword lights twinkling like countless stars. They couldn't be withstood, and one could only wait for death.

The rain of swords pierced through everything and pulverized them, but Li Qingshan didn't die. A petite figure blinked through the shadows and barred his front. The curved moon on her forehead released silver light that blocked the sword rain dripping down.

Silver light and sword rain fiercely collided amidst the roars of the snowstorm, illuminating the dark and quiet ravine as if it were daytime.

Soaring Dragon Elder said, "This should be the life-saving move that damn woman concubine Serenity left you! I want to see how long you can resist!" He pinched the hand seals of his sword secrets then pointed downward.

The rain of swords seemed endless. The silver light retreated inch by inch. Halfmoon resisted with clenched teeth.

Li Qingshan watched that small delicate figure and shouted, "You hurry to leave. Hide yourself, it's useless this way!"

Halfmoon said, “Shut your mouth, how can a mistress not protect her pet!”

“Who thinks you’re his mistress!”

“Meow! I’m not negotiating with you!”

The silver light was pressed down to within a foot of her body in the wink of an eye, obviously soon to break.

A giant dragon reaching a length thousand feet long twisted its body on an even higher skyline. It dived down from the dome of the sky with an angry roar.

One would require careful examination to discover that this wasn’t a giant dragon but a dragon-shaped hurricane. It wrung the great snow to pieces and struck toward Soaring Dragon Elder.

On the other end of the dragon twister, the jade-ribbed folding fan was already entirely spread open inside Gu Yanying’s hand, glowing with resplendent spiritual light. “Soaring Dragon Elder, better restrain your hand!”

Soaring Dragon Elder set down a harsh resolve and disregarded the dragon twister behind him. He performed a hand seal. The sword rain filling the sky receded at once and suddenly condensed back into a dazzling spiritual light harsh on the eyes in a vaguely spherical shape, just like an extremely dazzling star lighting up in the pitch-black sky.

“Ten thousand swords return to one, Meteor Fall.”

Gu Yanying said, “Careful!” But her voice couldn’t catch up to the giant sword’s diving speed either.

The silver light broke. Time seemed to slow to a crawl in Li Qingshan’s eyes. The drifting snow fluttered slowly. He stretched his hand out, but he could only watch on helplessly as the ray of light pierced through her chest.

Chapter 100: Climbing An Ice Sword

Li Qingshan caught her within his arms. He opened his mouth but no word would come out.

The dragon twister roared in rage and bombarded Soaring Dragon Elder's body, pounding him down to earth and tightly pressing him down. It spun at high speed and bore down like a drill, wrecking the firmly frozen grounds to pieces. Dust splattered everywhere.

The dragon twister transformed from a white snow dragon to a black earth dragon.

Great boulders rolled inside the mountain ravine and gravel scattered to all sides.

Gu Yanying's face sank down like water. She'd rushed up as soon as she'd obtained the news from Black Mouse Mountain's Great Mouse King, but she hadn't thought she'd still be one step too late. Her gaze fixated tightly on the ground the dragon twister had broken. "Take her away!"

A golden core master would definitely not be so easily killed. She had enough self-confidence she could display her skills with ease and not fall downwind in a one versus one duel, but it would be almost impossible if she had to protect two people.

Rays of light shot out from the deep hole dug by the dragon twister. Several dozen beams of sword light shattered the dragon

hurricane in an instant. Soaring Dragon Elder rose, his body enveloped in a globe-shaped aegis made of spiritual light.

“Gu Yanying, you can’t stop me!” A trail of fresh blood oozed from the corner of his mouth. It seemed that forcibly withstanding that attack hadn’t been pleasant for him either, but the resolve exuding from his eyes was invulnerable like a godly weapon smelted a hundred times.

“Cut the boasting!” Gu Yanying had also been stirred into true anger. “Heavenly Dance of a Hundred Dragons!” With a flourish of the jade-ribbed folding fan, a hundred dragon twisters charged sideways and knocked straight-on, twisting murderously toward Soaring Dragon Elder from different directions and different angles.

Everything standing in the paths of the dragon hurricanes were torn into shreds. Deep gullies were left one after another on the ground and the walls of the precipices. Great trees that would require many men to wrap around were one and all pulled out down to the roots, sucked into the dragon tornadoes, then wrung into pieces.

Death and chaos had descended in the space of an instant, causing cracked earth and landslides; it seemed like the end of days.

Soaring Dragon Elder’s expression became increasingly determined. He bit open the tip of his tongue and sprayed a mouthful of fresh blood on the Soaring Dragon Sword.

The Black Wind camp master Xiong Xiangwu had been able to use his fresh blood to trigger a spiritual talisman even with a mortal's body, then display a power far exceeding his real strength. Just what kind of fearsome technique would be launched when a golden core master used this move?

The longsword immediately twisted like a living creature as soon as it was tainted with fresh blood. It transformed into a golden dragon more than a hundred feet long amidst dazzling rays of light. It wasn't that it resembled a dragon, it was a genuine complete dragon possessing scales and claws, shaking its head and swaying its tail. It didn't fall downwind in the slightest as it tangled together with these dragon hurricanes, even if it fought a hundred by itself.

"You're crazy!" Gu Yanying's face exposed shock. It wasn't as simple as spitting some blood like mortals when it came to golden core masters. Rather, it would damage his cultivation; no one would casually use it for ordinary reasons.

The golden dragon defeated the dragon twisters one by one. Its own spiritual light also gradually dimmed down.

Soaring Dragon Elder took out a daoist talisman from inside his [Sumeru finger ring](#). "Heavenly Fate Elder had long ago calculated there would be some hindrances on this journey."

A Sumeru ring is presumably a ring shaped to be symbol of Sumeru, also known as Mt. Meru, a mountain supposed to be the center of all the universes physical or metaphysical in Buddhist cosmology (among others).

“Purple talisman!” Gu Yanying’s face became even graver. Among the dao of talismans, yellow talismans were bottom, crimson talisman were medium, and purple talisman were upper. The differences between their respective might were as far as the distance between heaven and earth. Purple talismans could only be manufactured by nascent soul cultivators, and furthermore they were one-off things. They were extremely rare even for golden core cultivators and were treated as life-saving talismans. He was actually willing to take it out.

“Shackles of Heaven and Earth, seal!”

Li Qingshan had picked up Halfmoon and leaped up the ravine, rushing toward that stretch of ice precipice to the north.

Little An followed tightly behind. Li Qingshan told him with a roar, “Go away, don’t follow me!” If Gu Yanying couldn’t stop Soaring Dragon Elder and they were to be pursued, then following him was a road straight to death.

Little An still followed, unwilling to leave. Li Qingshan said, “Are you deaf?” He waved his hand and slapped him away, sending him flying out several dozen feet.

Little An stared blankly at him. Li Qingshan turned his head. “Find a place to hide, don’t come out no matter what!” He left without any hesitation.

Li Qingshan carried Halfmoon and traveled forward toward the

Ice Sword Cliff. He could still sense the spiritual light soaring to the sky behind him even after leaving ten miles away. The squall surged. There was a patch of wetness on his hands, a thick and strong color of blood.

Halfmoon's face was pale white as she said wanly, "You're a good owner!"

Li Qingshan said, "Shut your mouth, don't talk!"

Halfmoon said, "Good or bad I'm still your mistress hey, can't you be a bit more polite. You get angry and start arguing at the slightest thing, you're simply even unrulier than me."

He didn't know how long he'd been sprinting inside the snowstorm, an instant or maybe a year. He suddenly lifted his head. An ice cliff barred his way. They finally arrived.

The sight from far away was already stunning. He was nearly terrified by this creation of heaven and earth crafted by the gods when he stood at the foot of the Ice Sword Cliff. He couldn't see the top of the cliff when he raised his head. It went on for who knew how many dozen thousand feet, and seemed about to topple over.

Li Qingshan gritted his teeth. He stretched his hand and touched the ice cliff. A gloomy chilliness penetrated directly inside down to his marrow. His claws that could cut metal and break jade only left slight faint traces on the ice. It was definitely not an ordinary block of ice.

Halfmoon opened her eyes. “Finally here. The legends have it this Ice Sword Cliff is a divine sword a god dropped down. Not a single bit or piece of it ever melted since the day it appeared, and on the contrary it keeps freezing and growing. It’s very hard to climb, we can’t go up relying on you.”

Li Qingshan said, “You just shut your trap. Hug me tight!” He carried Halfmoon on his back and let her hug his neck, then he stretched out his sharp claws and fastened them on the ice rampart. But he remembered as soon as he was about to lift his feet that his feet weren’t human feet anymore, but a pair of iron hooves.

The wall of ice was hard as steel, perfectly straight and smooth. It was harder to climb than any other precipice, and it was absolutely impossible to climb without the leverage from a pair of feet.

“Meowhahaha!” Halfmoon laughed up heartlessly just like when she used to bully Li Qingshan in days gone by. It was only that her laughter became increasingly weak and powerless, easily covered by the wind and the snow.

Boom!

Li Qingshan punched a heavy fist on the ice cliff, then knelt on the ground.

They’d come here after thousand trials and hardships, but they couldn’t go one step further. The Ice Sword Cliff was truly like a

giant sword that severed all of his hopes.

I'm not resigned!

The [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] revolved crazily inside him. Almost like a miracle, his pair of feet actually recovered. They were much bigger than ordinary feet, and the nails were also sharp claws, but it was still a true genuine pair of feet and not hooves.

One could only restore human shape after cultivating to the first layer, but he'd forcibly restored his pair of feet by relying on his mind and spirit.

Halfmoon said in astonishment, "Really powerful!"

Li Qingshan had no time to focus on his surprise and delight. He leaped on the ice cliff. "We're setting off!"

Li Qingshan carried Halfmoon on his back and climbed up step by step inside the blizzard, his sharp claws deeply spiking into the chilly ice.

The chilliness continuously permeated inside his skin and froze the marrow of his bones. He couldn't see the sky and couldn't see the ground; it seemed there were only the two of them left in the world as they advanced through extraordinarily arduous efforts.

"What good stuff does the Dragon province have? Is that nine-tailed fox empress beautiful? More beautiful than concubine

Serenity?” Li Qingshan prattled on endlessly. He who kept telling Halfmoon to shut her mouth actually chattered and jabbered on and on at this moment, because he could only maintain his consciousness through his utmost efforts, not letting the frigid cold capture his mind, not letting despair wear him down.

Because Halfmoon’s body became gradually cold as ice, gradually silent. Her eyes were closed as she leaned against Li Qingshan’s back, answering perfunctorily, “Of course... beautiful...”

There was no telling whether it was because her voice was too feeble, but it was engulfed by the noise of the wind.

Li Qingshan kept saying, “Persevere on, I’ll definitely take you, take you to the Dragon province.”

“I still haven’t heard you call me mistress?”

Chapter 101: A Green Bull Departs

Li Qingshan didn't even have the strength to reply anymore. The way forward was pervaded by the wind and the snow, going on seemingly forever without end. He kept on climbing upward, supporting himself with a single-minded thought.

Halfmoon suddenly said in a soft voice against his ear, "Sorry, mistress implicated you." Her two arms feebly let go of him. She dropped into the abyss of wind and snow with her eyes tightly shut and a peacefulness on her face that even actually containing the trace of a smile.

Li Qingshan subconsciously stretched his right hand and tightly caught her frozen hand.

He couldn't let go. But he couldn't advance another step on the ice wall either with his right hand missing. The cold wantonly invaded his body along with the halting of his motions. His blood gradually stopped flowing.

This place was already ten thousand feet above the ground. Even he could only die with a torn body and crushed bones if he were to fall.

He finally let out a crazed hysterical howl inside the blizzard, just like a surrounded beast trapped in a desperate impasse.

Two dots of red lights approached inside the windy snow. A figure was quickly climbing up.

Little An sprang up and carried Halfmoon then put her on Li Qingshan's back.

There was no need to exchange any word. Li Qingshan's lips were already frozen in any case. His right hand soared up as he continued his climb upward.

He suddenly saw the end of that seemingly endless ice cliff. It turned out he had been only a few hundred feet away from the clifftop.

A great hand fiercely grabbed the edge of the cliff. Li Qingshan climbed up with all his strength, not a single shred of strength left inside him. He forcibly propped up his body up, his trembling pair of hands gently stroking Halfmoon's cheeks. They were ice-cold.

There was no beating in her chest.

She was already dead.

Li Qingshan wept bitterly all of a sudden. A beam of rainbow pierced the windy snow. Soaring Dragon Elder emerged on the clifftop, his face pale-white and his clothes broken to shreds. He cast a glance at Halfmoon on the ground and let out an I-thought-as-much expression. How could an ordinary monster general be able to withstand his Meteor Sword.

But he'd still caught up without sparing any price or effort in

order to guard against all eventualities. Moreover there was Halfmoon's little bell, the things stored inside were fully enough to make up for his losses. A monster general's monster core was also very precious on top of that.

Li Qingshan wanted to fight to the bitter end, but he didn't even have the strength left to fight to the bitter end. He asked, "Why? What did she do?"

"Because she's a monster, you're also the same? This is your sin." Soaring Dragon Elder lifted the Soaring Dragon Sword, not even looking at Little An blocking the way in front of Li Qingshan as he waved it down.

"I kill you, but not because you're human." A man stood in front of Li Qingshan. No one knew when he'd appeared, Soaring Dragon Elder included. It was as if he'd stood there since a long long time ago already, seeming like an expert coming from ancient times to the future, immutable and everlasting.

His stature could only be said to be tall at most, and there wasn't any fearsome aura coming from him either, but the silhouette of his back was even more imposing than the Ice Sword Cliff under his feet in Li Qingshan's eyes.

A layer of green-blue enveloped his skin. His clearly bulging sturdy physique didn't appear fat in the slightest, but seemed more like the mountain peak undulating on a great mountain gone through the blow of a thousand winds and the batter of ten thousand rains. Every part of it was natural and harmonious, carrying the accumulation of boundless power.

Then Li Qingshan saw the pair of horns on his head, one of them broken. He couldn't help but shout, "Elder brother bull!"

Soaring Dragon Elder's eyes shrank and a warning came from every place inside the depths of his soul. He'd crossed over countless battlefields during his life, experienced countless dangers, but even adding them all together they still couldn't match the present danger.

He wanted to roar in anger, wanted to wave his sword. Wanted to use every supernatural skill and technique he'd ever learned in his life, take out every ounce of power and all of his trump cards. But he couldn't even lift a single finger against all expectations. He could only watch that man with eyes wide open and say in an off-key timbre, "Who...who are you?" How did such a terrifying character become the backing of these two little monsters. Heavenly Fate Elder never said anything about it, nothing of the sort had appeared in the divination trigrams either. Impossible, I'm not going to die here.

The green bull didn't answer his question however, but continued to say instead, "I kill you, because I want to kill!" He stretched out his right hand. Soaring Dragon Elder then vanished from this world.

That's right, vanished. There hadn't been any sign, there hadn't been any powerful technique either, or any dread or monster qi. An elder of the Hidden Sword Palace with a fame shaking the Verdant province, a golden core cultivator, had simply been blotted out like this.

“Brother bull...” Li Qingshan opened his mouth but didn’t know what to say. He’d thought before the green bull was probably very strong, but he’d certainly never expected he’d be terrifying to such a degree.

The green bull turned his head back and stretched his hand in front of Li Qingshan, a jade ring quietly lying inside. It was precisely Soaring Dragon Elder’s Sumeru finger ring. “I’ve turned you into such an appearance without your consent, this probably can be regarded as my apology! I left you something inside.”

A golden core cultivator’s lifelong collection of valuables had a value high enough to make the eyes of a great many cultivators redden in envy, even cultivators pure of heart and free of desire. Ordinary people couldn’t even exchange a single thing inside with the whole of their possessions.

“I know you have many questions, but believe me, the answers you find by yourself are far more valuable and extraordinary than what I could give you. Just as I could have given you the power to sweep unopposed through this world, but I didn’t, because the power you are able to find for yourself is also far above what I could give you, a hundred times stronger. Now, the time of parting has come.”

“What?”

“My presence has already been discovered by certain someones in the skies above. Your future roads, you’ll to walk on them on your

own. These days have been short but very happy. Remember, don't lower your head to anyone or anything; you once rode on my back."

The green bull's shape faded gradually away as he spoke. His voice was like a resounding bell, like the crumbling of mountains and the jolt of thunder, shaking Li Qingshan's heart and spirit.

"Wait..." Li Qingshan stretched his hand out, but he only caught that ring.

The green bull disappeared from between the heaven and earth as if he'd never existed, as if these years, these days had all been a mere dream. Only his last sentence was left continuously echoing inside Li Qingshan's heart.

"I'll wait for you on the nine skies, wait for the day you and me will stand side by side."

Above the Ice Sword Cliff was a patch of emptiness. There wasn't any stalk of vegetation, only ice and snow. The low layer of clouds pressed above his head. A great snow fell that didn't have enough time to shape into beautiful forms. The wind whistled "woo woo," seeming to weep.

There were times on this dividing line between the Dragon and Verdant provinces when a man would feel he had nothing at all, except for those utterly distant and unattainable dreams, a body with only icy coldness in its bosom, frozen tears, a numbed heart and spirit inside the bitter winter. The loneliness of the entire

world rushed into his heart.

There was something lightly touching him. He turned his gaze back and saw Little An. Those two dots of blood flames combusted even inside the limitless snowstorm, trying to impart some warmth onto him, to tell him, you're not alone by yourself.

Gu Yanying trod out from the windy snow and said in astonishment, "What happened?" She'd also taken out a purple talisman and forcibly broken Soaring Dragon Elder's "Shackles of Heaven and Earth," then hurried to the ice cliff. But Soaring Dragon Elder's aura had entirely vanished at that moment right now, vanished cleanly and thoroughly.

Li Qingshan hugged Halfmoon's icy-cold body in his arms and didn't answer. He didn't even know how to answer.

Gu Yanying even felt a sliver of dread after another. A golden core elder had inexplicably vanished just like this. This was probably going to create an earthquake across the entire Verdant province.

Could it have been the doing of that person from the Dark Shade Sect? Wrong, even if a nascent soul cultivator had the ability to kill a golden core master, they still couldn't possibly do it so quietly and noiselessly. Even a cricket knew to struggle, not to mention a golden core master.

Could it have something to do with him? Gu Yanying looked at Li Qingshan then shook her head soon after, because Li Qingshan's

was truly too puny. How could he have such a level of cultivation still if he were to have such fearful backing? A monster beast who hadn't formed a monster core had merely a cultivation around the fourth to fifth level even put among qi refining cultivators.

Her mind was in chaos despite an intelligence far exceeding ordinary people. The things tonight were truly too strange.

“Better give her to me!”

Li Qingshan said, “I promised to take her to the Dragon province.”

Gu Yanying said, “That's no great place to go, better to let her go back to her mistress' side!”

Li Qingshan said, “This is her last wish.”

“Last wish? She's not dead yet though?” The corner of Gu Yanying's mouth tugged a little.

“What!” Li Qingshan was shocked. He hurriedly probed Halfmoon's pulse, but it was truly not beating any longer. He looked questioningly at Gu Yanying.

Gu Yanying waved the folding fan in her hand toward the sky. A dragon tornado soared straight to the skyline and pierced a great hole in the thick layer of clouds originally pressing low atop their heads. The silver blue moonlight seemed like a waterfall, or

perhaps a searchlight shooting down from the sky.

It shone above the Ice Sword Cliff and fell on Halfmoon's body. The roaring blizzard surrounded all around them as before, but there was such quietness and serenity in this small area.

Her body glowed with silver blue brilliance, gradually brighter and brighter. Her eyelashes seemed to quiver a little.

Halfmoon opened her eyes bit by bit under Li Qingshan's dismayed face. "Where is this place?" She blinked her eyes and looked all around. "This here is... the Ice Sword Cliff!"

Li Qingshan sensed the body in his arms gradually recovering its temperature. He said in astonishment, "What's this about?"

Gu Yanying said, "The trashy innate supernatural skill of nine-lived cat monsters."

Halfmoon said, "Surnamed Gu, you're the trashy one!"

Gu Yanying said, "You can simply not resist at all once in a dead state. People will usually open your chest and break your tripe to take out the monster core probably, what is it if not trash? This time it's all thanks to... this guy." For a moment she had no idea how to call Li Qingshan. He most likely didn't want other people to know his human name either after becoming like this!

Halfmoon said, "Big Black, you really carried me up here?"

Big Black? The corner of Gu Yanying's mouth hooked up!

Li Qingshan stayed silent a moment, then thundered, "Bastard, why didn't you tell me earlier!" She made him so broken-hearted for so long all for nothing!

Halfmoon said, "Meowhahahaha, didn't I tell you? I'm not going to die."

Li Qingshan heaved a heavy sigh. He didn't want to pay attention to her anymore, but there was a happiness he couldn't express inside him.

Halfmoon noticed at this time two trails of sparkling and translucent frozen tears on Li Qingshan's face. The deepest strings of her heart seemed to be moved as she stretched her hands and stroked his cheeks. "Big Black, you cried?"

Li Qingshan said, "Don't go imagining your love's reciprocal, it's nothing but snow water."

Halfmoon moved close in front of Li Qingshan's face. "Hee hee, don't be embarrassed, it's very normal for pets to shed tears for their meowstress. That's right, you promised you would call me mistress, hurry up and say it, hurry up and say it!"

"Pet?" Gu Yanying exposed a strange smile. To be taken as pet by a pet, she had no idea if it was good fortune or bad fortune.

Chapter 102:

Li Qingshan itched to pinch Halfmoon's delicate neck and make her die another time.

Gu Yanying said, "Little Moon, we should go." Since she didn't know how Soaring Dragon Elder had vanished, she could only tacitly believe that he'd curbed his aura on his own and fled away, no matter the reason. It would probably really provoke a war if he'd truly died a violent death. This wasn't something she wanted to see.

Halfmoon had come back to life, but she was still extremely weak. She had simply no way to use even a single Shadow Blink, had simply no way of escaping right from under her eyes. "Fine, fine, let's say you won, I'll just go along with you."

Halfmoon helplessly walked toward Gu Yanying. She suddenly said to Li Qingshan, "Lower your head!"

Li Qingshan lowered his head, having no idea why. Halfmoon suddenly stood on her tiptoes and lightly kissed his cheek, stuffing an item inside his hand at the same time.

The gentle and moist feeling came and immediately went away with the touch.

Halfmoon jumped beside Gu Yanying before Li Qingshan even had time to bask in the aftertaste. "This is a reward! If you're free then come find me in Southern Pivot City." She wanted to take

him along, but it was impossible for random unrelated people to enter the province capital.

Li Qingshan looked at the center of his palm. It was a bottle of spirit medicine.

Gu Yanying merely pretended she didn't see anything. She waved her sleeves and rolled up a whirlwind, carrying herself and Halfmoon as they flew toward the sky along the trail left by that moonlight.

Halfmoon turned her head back and looked at Li Qingshan. She twisted her head back away; her smile disappeared. From her eyes resembling fresh lake water spilled out tears.

“Wait for me, I'll definitely go there.” Li Qingshan roared to the sky with his loudest voice.

Halfmoon suddenly turned around and loudly said something. The snowy wind actually swallowed her voice, but by spying the motions of her mouth, one could read the five words “I will wait for you.”

Gu Yanying also exposed amazement. The clouds closed up under their feet.

The last of the moonlight vanished atop the Ice Sword Cliff.

Li Qingshan still maintained his posture of roaring to the sky.

That roar was a promise for the green bull, for Halfmoon, and even more so, for himself.

I'll certainly go to the nine skies, I'll certainly take you to the Dragon province.

I'll certain find answers, I'll certainly obtain power.

The waterfall gushed downward. Li Qingshan once again stood in front of this waterfall. There wasn't a bull with a bullishness soaring to the sky beside him anymore, and there wasn't any young woman bathing inside the waterfall in front of him either.

He rubbed Little An's head. At least you're still by my side.

Without Halfmoon showing the way, he'd relied on his strong memories and followed the way they'd come to once again return to this place. He had the spirit turtle to restrain his aura, but he still met untold amount of dangers along the way before finally returning to this waterfall.

Winter had gone already. The earth began to return to spring.

It seemed like a lifetime ago.

Within these three short months, someone had told him, the Verdant province was thirty thousand miles across. Someone had told him, my goal is to leave the Verdant province. And finally someone had told him, I'm waiting for you on the nine skies.

Li Qingshan lowered his head and smiled as he said to Little An, “For now let’s see how far I can go!” Then he leaped down inside the deep pond.

The first thing Li Qingshan did once inside the water wasn’t to cultivate, but to sum up the lessons of his experience, to weigh the pros and cons, the successes and failures.

It was difficult for a small shrimp to obtain good results when drawn into a war between sharks. The shreds of meat exposed between the sharks’ teeth could make the small shrimp greatly increase in strength, but most likely it would also lead it to a definite death.

The reason he had been able to survive was entirely thanks to the protection of a monster from the depths like the green bull, but this monster from the depths had already left him, leaving him with the goal of becoming the same kind of monster from the depths.

If he wanted to achieve this goal, then he couldn’t rely on luck to survive, he couldn’t risk dangers he had absolutely no way to control. No one possessed an undying halo, and he would still be easily ground to pieces under an absolute power even if he had one.

A man didn’t only need the bull’s unwavering will and the tiger’s fierce courage, he also needed the spirit turtle’s profound patient endurance. This kind of endurance wasn’t about enduring anger and swallowing insults, being timid and gutless. It was about

setting one's aspiration high above, enduring what others couldn't endure, achieving what others couldn't achieve.

The reason the green bull hadn't acted from the beginning to eradicate Soaring Dragon Elder was perhaps to make him understand these principles. Anyone could talk about great principles, but only those who'd experienced them could truly understand them and engrave them upon their heart and mind.

Without the roaring despair above the precipice, how would he have understood the value of power, the significance of friends.

He longed for a stronger power.

There were no months nor years inside the mountains. Soft shoots turned into green leaves. Flower buds blossomed into luxuriant flowers.

The flow of the waterfall became stronger than in winter, the noise also more deafening.

Li Qingshan sat under the waterfall. All these every noises, all these every changes, they fell into his ears but didn't cause the slightest turmoil to his mind.

He was already not only cultivating in the space between extreme quiet and extreme motion. He was even more experiencing nature's whispers of changes. Or perhaps these two matters were the same thing for him to begin with.

The spirit medicine was eaten pill by pill, transforming into spiritual power surging like seas and rivers. But their use wasn't only limited to this for him.

Amidst the absolute meditation, he dimly sensed the existence of that incomparably vast spiritual power between heaven and earth. There was no place it wasn't present, ruling every whisper of change in the whole world.

When he became like a spirit turtle hiding inside the deep seas, forgetting his own existence, then these spiritual powers no longer rejected him, naturally melting inside his body on their own.

Just as the Daoist scriptures said, “[Strengthen their bones, weaken their wills, empty their hearts, fill their bellies.](#)” It was also like what the green bull had taught him at the beginning, only eating to a full stomach and strengthening oneself to a healthy body was the foundation of everything. And only with a weak will and empty mind would one not be perplexed by distracting thoughts, achieving the genuine oneness of man and nature, sensing the existence of the spiritual qi between heaven and earth.

“Strengthen their bones, weaken their wills, empty their hearts, and fill their bellies” is a twist on a passage from the Tao Te Ching: “Hence the sage, in the exercise of government, empties their minds, fills their bellies, weakens their wills, and strengthens their bones.”

For humans, this was only something that could be easily achieved after passing through one heavenly tribulation and achieving the foundation building stage from the qi refining stage.

Otherwise one would require the greatest of opportunities and perceptions.

But this was an innate instinct for monsters. The birds and beasts in the wildness of the mountains were undoubtedly unthinking in the eyes of men, only able to follow their instincts to copulate and hunt, to reproduce and survive. It followed they were nevertheless a part of the great nature, and could innately sense things many humans couldn't sense, spiritual qi but one thing among them.

Humans had also lost the ability to merge in harmony with nature at the same time it obtained wisdom and intelligence. They needed various kinds of methods to cultivate in their desire to prolong their own lives. Meanwhile, the life span of any random monster was much higher than any human whose strength was close to it.

You gained some and lost some. Perhaps this was precisely the fairness of nature.

The green bull had once said that Li Qingshan could only be regarded as half a monster, because although his body had transformed into a monstrous demon, his spirit was still the spirit of a human. That was why he hadn't been able to perceive the spiritual qi of heaven and earth yet.

There were boundless amounts of magical powers in the world. There were countless techniques that could make a human transform into odd creatures, but that was only odd creatures and not monsters. The green bull's plans would also not have been that much extraordinary either if it hadn't been so. However it seemed

he'd actually prepared everything for Li Qingshan a long time ago already.

Along the cultivation of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets], Li Qingshan was able to temporarily put aside the wisdom of a human as well as those random thoughts coming along such wisdom, then start to genuinely transform into a monster, using the eyes of a monster to look upon the world, using the soul of a monster to sense this world.

There no telling how much time went by once more. When the flourishing flowers started to wither one by one.

A great amount of spiritual qi gathered around Li Qingshan. This place the green bull had chosen was a land with thick spiritual qi to begin with.

Every spiritual pill had been eaten. The entirety of the monster qi inside Li Qingshan rushed like sea waves to be then suppressed by the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] and continuously compressed and condensed.

Little An who was amusing himself alone suddenly lifted his head and watched the deep pool in front of the waterfall. He'd been quietly waiting all these days, playing by himself, never leaving far away.

Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding!

An invisible power calmed the turbulent pond; it became a flawless water mirror. The waterfall flying down no longer stirred any splash either.

Li Qingshan had finally cultivated the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets] to the first layer. A huge rumble echoed in his soul at the same time. His body once again grew taller and bigger, close to twenty feet, exuding an aura that caused even the waterfall hammering down to surge open.

All the monster qi inside his body had condensed into a small round bead big as the pad of a small finger!

He'd finally achieved the most important step in becoming a monster, the cultivation of a monster core.

Li Qingshan lowered his head and watched the mirror-like water surface. He lightly stroked the pair of horns on top of his head. The two words "North Moon" on them appeared not as obvious as before, but they appeared to have integrated with the pattern lines of the bull horns, seemingly indelible.

He once again remembered Halfmoon, remembered that pledge never completed. He lightly closed his eyes. Wait for me, I will definitely free you from this bird cage and accompany you to the Dragon province.

He suddenly opened his mouth. The monster core flew out and circled around his body, as if it were under the traction of a certain invisible force. His thoughts revolved and the monster core shot

out sharply, piercing through countless huge boulders inside the water pond in an instant. It was simply unstoppable, more frightening than any hidden weapon.

Monsters and demons didn't understand how to cultivate a core, therefore they knew from birth how to absorb spiritual qi. Monsters and demons didn't know how to refine weapons either. A monster core was the strongest weapon.

Although there was the danger of the monster core being snatched away once it was released, that could only be done with an absolute disparity in strength. So this kind of danger couldn't be really said to be any great danger either, because they would be done in all the same even if they didn't use their monster core, then have their monster core taken out. It was just the same as when human cultivators fought each others. There would simply be no more use in fighting if even your flying sword could be easily caught by the opponent.

Li Qingshan looked at the monster core floating in front of him and thought, now there wouldn't be anyone who'd believe him even if he said he was human.

He observed carefully and found out the monster core wasn't wholly round. It was assembled by countless hexagonal fragments instead, seemingly a little different from ordinary monster cores. It was probably an effect of the [Spirit Turtle Sea Guarding Secrets], but he'd also only seen a single monster core and didn't dare be certain.

Li Qingshan stretched his right hand. One transparent wave after

another gathered inside his hand, condensing into a water ball, then transforming into various shapes. If one were to theorize it from the point of view of the [five elements philosophy](#), then he should belong to the category of water monsters, with the power of manipulating water spirits.

The five elements philosophy is more accurately called the five phase philosophy: wood, fire, earth, metal, and water.

He casually tossed the water ball aside, swallowed the monster core down, and shouted, “Spirit Turtle Dark Armor!”

No turtle shell actually appeared behind his back. A ball-shaped shield of spiritual light filled up instead. This spherical shape was the same as the monster core under closer examination, also formed by countless countless hexagons joined together.

The flow of the waterfall flying down fell on the Spirit Turtle Dark Armor. There was not a single drip of water bead that could fall on Li Qingshan’s body.

This was an innate supernatural skill he’d comprehended after forming his monster core, but it didn’t stop there.

Li Qingshan straightened his body and sucked in a deep mouthful of air. He lifted his head and issued a wild howl. His monster qi triggered sound waves and set off a fierce gale soaring straight to the sky. The waterfall was split open by the surge. There were even deep fan-shaped marks left behind on the rocky wall.

The “Tiger Demon Wild Howl” seemed awe-inspiring, but it

could only cause oscillations to be used when bullying weaklings. It had almost no use against an opponent at the same level. Now this howl of his had a reduced area of influence, but it could split water apart and crack stone, causing genuine killing wounds.

This was the second supernatural skill he'd comprehended. He gave it the name of "Tiger Demon Killing Howl."

"Bull Demon Hoof Stamp!"

Li Qingshan jumped into the water and heavily stamped on the bottom of the pond. The rocks that had gone through an untold amount of impacts from the flow of water suddenly shattered to pieces, the circular shockwaves raging to all sides. Reefs broke loudly wherever they went.

It seemed ten thousand tons of explosives had detonated at the bottom of the pool, pushing the entire pond of water flying up the sky, exposing the completely shattered bottom.

Bull, Tiger, Turtle, three types of creatures, three types of innate supernatural skills that had been comprehended at the same time the moment Li Qingshan had formed his monster core.

Afterwards was precisely the moment to "become a man again."

End of Book 2

Additional Notes:

A little explanation about the term “monster.” Most of the time it refers to the term 妖 (yao) or 妖怪 (yaoguai). The best translation would probably be “yokai,” the evil monsters/spirits from Japanese lore, but I was reluctant to use a Japanese term in a CN novel, not because I have anything against Japanese people or culture but because it might have broken immersion in a CN novel themed after Chinese mythology.

So the “monsters,” for lack of a better term, refer to intelligent creatures of mostly animal origin who are often said to be man-eating, to be often disguised in a (mostly) human shape, and so on, but not exactly embodying evil like “demons” even if they are seen as evil.

There is also the term 妖魔 (yao mo), which technically means yokai and demon, and commonly just refers to evil creatures in general. It’s usually translated as just demons, and here I’ve translated it as monsters and demons, monstrous demons, or simply demons, since there’s no distinction between them in the story so far.